

RELIGION IN LIFE

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A CHRISTIAN QUARTERLY

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Vol. XVII

Winter Number, 1947-1948

No. 1

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Printed in the United States of America

Published by

ABINGDON-COKESBURY PRESS

150 FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK

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Who's Who?

EDGAR J. GOODSPEED, Ph.D., L.H.D., Litt.D., LL.D. Ernest D. Burton Distinguished Service Professor, Emeritus, Biblical and Patristic Greek, University of Chicago; occasional lecturer in History, University of California at Los Angeles.

CLYDE A. HOLBROOK, B.D., Ph.D. Dean, Shove Memorial Chapel, and Associate Professor of Religion, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

JOHN EDWARD LANTZ, B.D., M.A. Associate Editor of Youth Publications, Board of Education, The Methodist Church, Nashville, Tennessee.

FREDERICK E. MASER, M.A., Th.B. Minister of the St. James Methodist Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

IRVING R. MILLER, B.A., B.D. Pastor of the Springfield Methodist Church, Springfield, South Carolina.

JOHN HENDERSON POWELL, JR., B.D., M.A., Ph.D. Minister, The Reformed Church, Bronxville, New York.

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JOHN C. SCHROEDER, D.D., LL.D. Master of Calhoun College and Professor of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

HARRY MILTON TAYLOR, M.A., B.D., Ph.D. Minister, Calvary Methodist Church, East Orange, New Jersey.

ANDRÉ TROCMÉ. Pastor, The Reformed Church, and co-founder of Collège Cévenol, a "work-camp" college for Christian youth from all over Europe at Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, France; International Secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, France.

LESLIE D. WEATHERHEAD, M.A. Minister, The City Temple, London, England.

R. FREDERICK WEST, B.D., Ph.D. Professor of Religion, Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana.

FREDRIC POTTER WOODS, A.B., B.D. Minister, Birdville Methodist Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

F. J. YETTER, M.A., B.D. Pastor of Grace Methodist Church, Paterson, New Jersey.

RELIGION IN LIPS is published quarterly by Abingdon-Cokesbury Press at 75 cents per copy. Subscription price, \$2.00 per year, \$5.00 for three years in the United States and possessions and Mexico; Canada, postage 18 cents per year additional; other foreign postage, 30 cents per year additional. For the convenience of readers in Great Britain, subscriptions will be received by the Epworth Press, 25-25 City Road, London, E. C. 1, at the rate of nine shillings and sixpence per year.

Publication office, 810 Broadway, Nashville 2, Tennessee. Editorial office, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, New York. Entered as Second Class Matter, August 29, 1942, at the post office in Nashville, Tennessee, under Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized March 16, 1923.

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The Protestant Churches and the New World*

LESLIE D. WEATHERHEAD

Answers to the question, "What are we to do in the present situation to make the church what we dream it might be?"

THERE IS NO DOUBT that, like all other branches of the Church, the Protestant churches have failed to win our people in any significant measure to the love and service of Christ. The Church cannot fail. It is an eternal reality in the unseen. All branches of the Church on earth, with their different denominational emphases, are faulty translations into human history of an eternal idea in the mind of God. Should every one of them fail to function, the Eternal Idea would soon break out again in some historical expression or other, "coming down out of heaven from God." There are enough people in the world who truly love Christ to make that certain.

But what are we to do in the present situation to make the Church what we dream it might be; a joyous fellowship of wise and ignorant, high and low, rich and poor, united in spirit because bound together in the love of Christ, serving one another, continually drawing in outsiders by the infection of its own radiant quality of life, and attacking evil wherever it is found to hurt the lives of men?

In the spirit of the Chinese proverb that says, "It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness," I want to make some suggestions which the Protestant churches are free enough to make.

I. LOYALTY TO TRUTH

We live in the age of science with a vengeance. For our young people science is the god more sincerely worshiped than any other. Her idolaters fall down before her. What "science teaches" is the last word. They are trained to believe what science "proves" and nothing else. When we ask them to come to church, we are inviting them to enter a new and quite different world. Let it be granted at once that religion does not

*This article is an abridgment of a chapter, "The Free Churches and the New World," in *Has the Church Failed?*, edited by Sir James Marchant, Odhams Press, Hertfordshire and London, England.

pretend to offer the same kind of evidence as science; but I am quite convinced that if we are to win the younger generation even to the point where they respect religion, let alone follow its intellectual leadership, we must adopt a different attitude toward truth from that which obtains at present. In a sentence, we must love the Lord our God with all our mind. We must be utterly loyal to the truth and state the truth, as far as we can see it, in language which a sixteen-year-old can understand.

When our young people come to church they find that, in hymns and lessons and often in the sermon, ideas of enormous importance are assumed to be true. The worshiper is expected to accept them as true, though they often appear either incomprehensible or incredible. Little or no attempt is made to show them to be even reasonable. They are stated in antiquated language about which, no doubt, the educated parson makes a mental reservation, or a private interpretation; but nothing could be more confusing to the mind of a youth brought up to believe only that which science proves. Sometimes creeds are recited which he is asked to accept in "faith," though they seem to deal with subjects about which Christ said nothing, and many of which are relatively unimportant as far as life in the modern world is concerned. Ancient psalms are read and chanted which breathe a spirit as far removed from Christianity as Hitler from Christ,¹ or express a view of God, which, if believed, would make religion a neurosis and mislead the worshiper as dangerously as would an invitation to hide from bombs in an air-raid shelter made of three-ply wood painted to look like stone.²

Scientists do not cling to traditional expressions of ideas after the truth has fled from them. They do not care more for what is venerable than for what is true. They do not say one thing and mean another, or maintain a spurious unity by a species of intellectual dishonesty, as we do when we say, for example, "I believe in the resurrection of the body." For we really mean, "I believe in the survival of personality"; and the "unity" of those who all say the same creed is only attained by giving the word "body" various meanings, very different from that intended by the original coiner of the phrase. Scientists do not say, "I believe that the atom is the smallest conceivable part of an element," making meanwhile a mental reservation that when they say "atom" they should be understood to mean "a negative unit of electricity," or anything else subsequently discovered to fit the statement better. Scientists are not

¹ e.g., Psalms 137:8-9.

² e.g., Psalms 91:7.

tied by the leg, by however long a rope, to a series of ideas which simply are not true or relevant to following Christ. Scientists are ready to follow truth wherever it leads and to give up the most tenaciously held and most venerable views if the truth is not in them. They, far more truly than we, love God "with all their minds."

Jesus did that. He was not very sympathetic with those who chanted the traditional answer; he retorted, "Moses said . . . but I SAY . . ." "Padre," said a youngster during the war, "what do you really believe? I know the creeds and the articles, but what do you *really* believe?"

Youth has the right to a straight answer. The mighty statements of Christian truth have value for personality only when they win authority from the consent of our own minds, not when we are told to believe them because they are in the Bible or the creeds. As if we *could* believe a thing because we are told we must! The mind doesn't work that way. Jesus never once demanded support for an intellectual proposition. When his way is followed a man makes his creed as he goes along, and it is the only creed worth two cents.

Said Froude: "If medicine had been regulated three hundred years ago by Act of Parliament; if there had been 39 articles of Physic and every licensed practitioner had been compelled under pains and penalties to compound his drugs by the prescriptions of Henry the Eighth's physician, Dr. Butts, it is easy to conjecture in what state of health the people of this country would at present be found." The religious health of our people is undermined because they have no idea what we do believe, or why, or how religion is related to the task of living victoriously in the modern world. Creeds and articles were not originally written down as final expressions of truth. They were written down to combat the misunderstanding and criticisms by which the infant church was assailed. They are entitled to respect. But what a man believes is *so* important that no one may try to coerce him or bind him with shackles.

In Protestant churches let us not be tied to any form of words; let us serve the truth and welcome those who would follow the way of Christ. Let us not raise a barrier that Christ never raised, to keep from religious activity some of the finest people of our day, to lose the respect, let alone the intellectual leadership, of this generation.

II. UNITY IN SOCIAL ENDEAVOR

If what is said above is as important as I think it to be, it is not surprising that the churches are so divided. I cannot think that it is de-

sirable, or other than inevitable, that they should be otherwise, as long as they are one in love for Christ and in service to the world. Frankly, I think the divisions of the churches are made a smoke screen by the worldling to excuse the attitude which is too indifferent to join in the cause of Christ. The excuse is on a par with the hoary one about the number of hypocrites in the churches who are alleged to put the "man in the street" off religion; which again is on a par with dismissing Beethoven because the girl next door murders his sonatas. Businessmen do not find disunion a scandal to the spirit of commerce. No one raised objections to the different traditions and ways of fighting in the various regiments in the army, so long as action against the enemy was not interfered with thereby. "Gentlemen," said Nelson, coming onto the deck of his flagship one day and seeing two officers fighting, "there is only one enemy, France." For the churches there is only one enemy, evil. Said John Wesley, in a famous passage:

If thy heart is right, as my heart is with thy heart, give me thy hand. I do not mean be of my opinion. You need not. I do not expect it nor desire it. Neither do I mean, "I will be of your opinion." I cannot. It does not depend on my choice. I can no more think, than I can see or hear, as I will. Keep you your opinion and I mine as steadily as ever. You need not even endeavor to come over to me or bring me over to you. I do not desire you to dispute those points or to hear or speak one word concerning them. Let all opinion alone on one side and the other. Only give me thy hand.

I cannot see why there should be criticism of the ritual of the Anglo-Catholic, or of the simple worship of the Friend who finds the ritual superfluous, or of the Salvationist who likes the uniform and the band, or of the Methodist of the "hearty" variety, so long as all combine against evil, as truly as all regiments against the enemy.

For myself, I will give every support in my power to all plans to unite denominations where we can do so sincerely. But I am interested less in long conferences and disputations, with concession here and sticky stubbornness there, than by a conference, say, in "Puddleton," consisting of the vicar, the Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, and Baptist ministers, with the Quaker and Salvation Army representatives, to decide what united action could be taken to remove the slums down by the River Puddle, to expose the callousness of the slum landlord, to enquire into the unjust dismissal from the local factory of a man with a wife and children dependent on him, and to enquire into the alleged sadism of the headmaster at the local school.

Unity in social action, in other words, would rouse the outsider to

the fact that religion is coterminous with all life and relevant to every phase of life and every person's life—not the “interest” (in the same category as golf) of a few complacent, smug, and self-satisfied pietists who think their brand of Christianity is the only true one and regard God as the special Patron of their denominational chapel. Moreover, unity in social action would bring those who fought together in a crusade nearer to one another than they could be brought by many conferences on church unity.

I know that the church, as such, has not the mental equipment to barge into every realm of social activity with ability or authority to solve technical problems. But there is no area of life in which she ought not to act morally; fearlessly denouncing evil, even though it flourishes in high places amongst socially “important” people. Jesus said that his Church would prevail against the gates of hell. Most churches are not in sight of the gates of hell. They concern themselves only with running their own show. There are nice little tea meetings and pleasant occasions of fellowship, but make no impact whatever on the pagan area around. One gets the same sense of futility as one would have in seeing a power station equipped with dynamos sufficient to provide light and heat for a city, content to cater only for the building in which the dynamos were housed.

I believe that there is not one social evil cursing our life today which could not be swept away in this generation, if all those who loved Christ and believed in his way of life, were united in *action* against it. Such united action would not only be a witness that the outsider could not miss. It might make the only desirable kind of “union of the churches” a *fait accompli*. At any rate, we should understand one another better, end the criticism hurled at us by our enemies, and *begin* to answer the prayer of our Lord on the night before his death.

III. THE CENTRALITY OF CONVERSION

Yet, if I have carried the reader even so far, I fear he will walk with me no further. For I now want to say that, in my view, the chief cause of the Church's failure is that she has forgotten her *raison d'être*. She no longer seriously fulfills the task for which she exists. When the Apostles went forth from the Upper Room—the first Christian church in the world—they did not go with a message about houses, but about hearts; and they did not have much to say about wages, except the wages of sin; and their message was not aimed at social evil, but was concerned

with a change of heart on the part of the individual through a transforming experience.

I want to say very definitely that that is the true *raison d'être* of the Church. She exists to offer the transforming friendship of Christ to everybody, and if she fails to do that she fails to justify her existence. No other ways of serving the community must blind her to her primary task and her supernatural aim. Philanthropic associations of earnest and intelligent people could do something about social evil, but I hold very definitely that Christ is the only Redeemer and that his power is the only factor that really does change men's lives.

Now, if this be true, is anyone surprised that the churches have failed? Where are the churches in which conversions are continuous, in which the lives of men are continually being changed, in which the old life of selfishness is given up and life with Christ as its center and Christ as its goal is being begun?

When I talk about conversion I would make clear what I mean. I would try to strip from the word the emotional accretions which may have adhered to it from experiences of our own youth, or stories we have read or heard from others. I am not disparaging the revivalist meeting. I am only pleading that the word "conversion" is not merely to be thought of in terms of that particular and often rather unsatisfactory method. I mean by conversion, the beginning at least of a change of heart, a change of mind, a change of attitude, a change of direction.

In his first chapter Mark tells us that when John was arrested, Jesus went into Galilee and preached the gospel of God, saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel." I am going to translate colloquially as follows: "The time is ripe. The kingdom of God is here. Change your way of looking at life (re-pent means think again), and believe in the good news." And the good news was and is that there is opened up through the message of Christ, through the love of God which Christ reveals, and, above all, through day-by-day fellowship with the living Christ, a new way of life.

Who are these converted people whom the Church exists to create? They are not ready-made saints. They are on the right road, but they know very well they are not at the end of the road. Converted people are not those who shun all the legitimate delights of our culture and civilization. They are not people who do not dance and do not smoke and do not go to the theater or the pictures, and over whose head is the

cloud made up of a thousand "thou shalt nots." They are not people who give up their ordinary job. They are not people who are completely changed in a moment, save in direction.

Many converted people cannot point to the day, let alone the hour, when they were converted. But, if they gave you their confidence, they might tell you they are quite sure that Christ means more to them than anything else in the world; that in the center of their being there is a fire burning which they guard with care lest anything should extinguish it, which they refuel with diligence so that others may be cheered by the brightness of its burning, so that others may warm the hands of their starved humanity at its glow. These are the converted people. They are the people who make the Church, and to make more of these people is the primary purpose of the Church. These are they who have the real thing.

If there is still doubt as to who is and who is not converted, let half a dozen questions be ruthlessly asked. I adopt a direct method of address.

1. If every person in the early Church had been like you, how far would Christianity have spread?

2. Every day your life touches the lives of other people. Probably in office, school, hospital, workshop, factory, warehouse, or whatever it is, you touch the same people day after day. Have they gathered that you have a secret resource in Christ, and does the quality of your life make them desire to possess what you have found in him?

3. If someone came to you and said, "You are a Christian. You, therefore, have a personal experience of Christ. I want to get it. Will you show me?"—could you do so, not by telling them to read a book, or to go and hear such-and-such a preacher, but could you, *out of your own experience*, lead another to Christ?

4. Have you really got an experience which has done so much for you that it is worth passing on, and are you quite happy to have found something that can make such a difference and yet about which you have never raised a finger or pen, never spoken a word, to give to others what you have?

5. Do you in your heart of hearts think that Christ's parables and Paul's metaphors were exaggerated? Jesus, in the parable of the hidden treasure, implied that it was worth losing everything to gain this relationship of the soul with God, and in the story of the pearl of great price, he implied that, though a lot of other things in life were very desirable, this was more precious than them all.

6. When you contribute to overseas missions are you glad to do so that others may find what you have found, or do you attempt to bluff God and mask your own spiritual poverty by paying for other people to be given that which you have refused?

Now do you ask why the churches have failed? I will answer the question in one sentence. The churches have failed because they are cluttered up with unconverted people. The motives even of the church-going that remains are mixed indeed. There are ministers in the Church of Christ who are unconverted men. To be a church official does not give you the real thing, or compel a genuine experience, and, though we guard our membership as carefully as we can, you will admit that some odd fish get through the net that Peter, the fisherman, would have pitched back whence they came.

We say that we are sorry that the church is failing, but so many of us make it fail because we have produced a counterfeit Christianity. The greatest enemy of Christianity is the spurious substitute that goes by that name, and the greatest barrier against the coming of his kingdom in modern times is the number who follow the forms of religion without the fire, who say the words without the meanings, who attend the worship and enjoy the hymns, and, indeed, everything that is offered to them in the hour they spend in a beautiful building, but never have taken Christ seriously and never intend to. Frankly, they have never caught a real glimpse of what Christ was talking about and they never bother to ask.

Compare them with the early Christians and we find that men and women, with nothing like the education or culture or intellectual development of modern days, went out into a pagan world with half a dozen essential things which few members of the modern church possess:

1. A transforming, communicable experience of the living Christ.
2. A passion to pass it on.
3. An unbreakable fellowship with the other members of the converted group.
4. A love for men which was not dependent on being loved, or liked, or flattered; a love not in terms of sentimental feeling, but of unbreakable good will and high desire.
5. An inward serenity or peace not dependent on the number of things there were to do in a day.
6. A deep sense of joy not dependent on being happy; for joy is not the opposite of unhappiness, but the opposite of unbelief, and the

word "joy" is too great and grand to be confused with the superficial thing we call happiness. It was joy and peace which Jesus said he left men in his will. "My peace I give unto you." "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be fulfilled."⁸

I think now that if I had to tackle an empty church—as I have had to do in my own ministry—I would not do what I did then. Young and enthusiastic and eager for "results," I sought to fill the building. I think if now I were faced with an empty building, I would of course be glad at any sign that people sought to come to worship God, but I would be more eager to establish the true foundation of a church. That is to say, I think I would gather round me a small group of people who were really converted, who were facing Christ's way, who had within their hearts, however small, the true flame of love for him, whose light and heat they daily sought to increase. And living in frequent and close communion with this group, I should pray that we might set forth such an attractive quality of life, with the half-dozen characteristics I have just mentioned, that we should not have to adopt stunts and devices to get men into the church; but that men and women (quite slowly probably) would say not, "All right, I'll come and help you," but, "May I come and join you?"

Then the church would be built up from the center and when we did "bring in the outsider" we should have a truly Christian fellowship into which to bring him. For the trouble is now that when the outsider comes in, if he comes in far enough, he is often nauseated and shocked by the difference between his dream of what a Christian church should be and the superficial, trivial gossip-shop which most of our churches are. Frankly, nothing would embarrass most modern churches more than an answer to their tepid prayers. If revival came and many sought the burning experience which makes the Book of Acts a beacon for all time, modern churches simply would not know what to do, or how to handle the situation.

IV. LEADERSHIP IN WORK AND PLAY

Having dealt with the most essential issue, we may go on to say that the interest and the concern of the church must extend to every part of man's life. The church cannot be indifferent to any circumstances which rob man of his birthright, and where conditions make man work

⁸ John 14:27; 15:11.

under great disadvantages and take his leisure in undesirable ways, no church worthy of the name can keep silent.

In the midst of writing this article I went to a café for lunch, and sat with three businessmen whom I had never seen before. They seemed average businessmen. Two were employers of labor. The third was silent and I learnt nothing whatever about him. The burden of the other two was that the government was bad and the times evil, but most seriously, that the workingman took all he could get and gave a minimum in return, and that grudgingly. To remedy this they argued politically and I will not reproduce their arguments. When I said that I thought a revival of real religion would do most to set things right, they did not prove hostile or indifferent; but one said, very sadly: "Ah, that cannot possibly happen. There is no real religion left in this country."

I believe he is wrong. I believe that, in the ways suggested above, we must work for revival. And I believe that a truly religious man, whether employer or employee, if he gets his perspective right, feels that he must and can translate his religion into terms of daily work. Frankly, I find that in these days the employer is far more ready to do the best by his men than the men are ready to reciprocate. There must be exceptions, and I may not have enough experience to speak; but I find it a more frequent experience to meet an employer who has a concern about his men than a worker who has a high sense of putting his very best into his work through all the hours for which he is paid.

Yet, if work were elevated by religious experience to the point where we saw that "all service ranks the same with God," that the divisions between sacred and secular disappear, that service to the community is service to God, then we should set out in the morning with the intention of offering our day's work, not to the irritating foreman or boss, or to a hated and absentee capitalist, but to God. Frankly, until the whole industrial system is Christianized, I see no other way by which the work some folk have to do can be redeemed from soul-killing monotony and from appearing to make man into a machine, grinding away through long, dreary hours; a machine for another man's ends, or, worse still, the ends of an impersonal board of unknown directors. The church cannot be indifferent to any system, or to any individual circumstances which do not honor man as a son of God, at least potentially, and which do not make the aim and end of his labor the expression of his personality, the service of his fellows and the glory of God.

Some words may be allowed on the church's attitude to leisure. The

gifts of God through science, which has contributed so immensely to man's comfort, have been denied him through his own greed. I mean that a thousand time-saving and energy-saving devices should have left a place for leisure. If I can telephone my friend instead of visiting him on horseback, I ought to have that time saved for some leisure pursuit. But no! Men take all that science gives and ask for more, and never "stand and stare." The work of the world, we are assured, could all be done in a five-day week,⁴ leaving time to "stand and stare," or engage in creative activity like music or carving. But instead, a kind of brain-fever has set in. I often think it is only because we are all mad that we don't recognize the disease in one another! Only when in some country place we talk to an old philosopher leaning over a gate, do we realize what highly civilized life has become. Last summer, in John Buchan's lovely Tweedsmuir country, I talked to a Scottish shepherd who lived in a cottage five miles from any other habitation. As I described London and asked how he would like to live there, he said quietly, "I think I'd go mad." I think he would. We all have.

The church in the new age must fight for a leisurely Sunday, not because Moses told us to do so in the Commandments, nor because our Lord emphasized, with typical tolerance and understanding, the keeping of the Sabbath day, but to fence off a little oasis in the dusty desert of rush and turmoil in which man can be quiet and look at God. The Semitic origin of the word "Sabbath" means "Stop what you are doing." I think Pascal was right when he said, "All the evils of life have fallen upon us because men will not sit quietly alone in a room."

Some have been foolish enough to say that increased leisure in the lives of men would mean increased evil. The facts are against them. It is because men are too tired and too rushed to dig the garden in the evening, or carve wood, or listen to music, or watch the birds, that they drop too often into the pub or see bad films. They must take "canned" entertainment as those who have no time to cook decent meals take canned foods.

The sex instinct is the root of many of our social problems. For many folk its demands are insistent from sixteen to sixty. Havelock Ellis tells us that art began among men and women who, for various reasons, could not be sexually satisfied in a biological way. They sub-

⁴ Lord Leverhulme once wrote, "With the means that science has placed at our disposal, we might provide for all the wants of each of us in food, shelter, and clothing by one hour's work per week for each of us from school age to dotage."

limited sex and used up some of its overplus in creative activity which we call "art." They were "wedded" to art. They "loved" it. We still use the words, and rightly. But people are so tired and rushed, and sex is so clamorous, that they yield to those ways of satisfying it which make the smallest demand. The whole community suffers, and individuals do not make the character progress which really creative work would accomplish for them and in them. Without play our health suffers, mentally, physically, and even spiritually, for we have no time to pray. Delight in making things, in creative craftsmanship, disappears. Sex problems are exacerbated, and the mad fever to which I have referred sets in till it brings men to the point when they *cannot* stop, and nothing but incapacitating illness restores them to their senses.

God meant every part of life to be capable of expression as worship. Modern civilization is making that impossible. The church should so love humanity and be so concerned that men's birthright is being filched from them, that in the new age she should untiringly seek to offer leadership regarding the conditions under which men both work and play.

V. TOWARD A WORLD FAMILY

My final word must be about God's world-wide purpose which, we believe, is to bring all nations and all individuals into one great family wherein the motto holds, "all for each and each for all."

The kingdom of God cannot come fully anywhere until it has, in one sense, come everywhere. No new world can come into being if any one nation is outside the family relationship. No perfect world can leave out any individual. The ideal of the family under the Fatherhood of God means that no accident of wealth, education, social status, let alone the color of the skin, can be allowed to become a barrier between the sons of God. It always seems to me that the main point of the third temptation was that Jesus should set up a Jewish kingdom, at any rate as a first step. In these days, with our present perspective, we can hardly realize that out there in the silence of the desert a new thing was born into the world; the ideal of a world family in which all the kingdoms of the world find their place in the purpose of God, who alone is great enough to sit upon the throne of the world. St. Paul followed in his Master's footsteps and taught that for the Christian there must be neither Greek nor Jew, nor barbarian nor Scythian, nor bond nor free, but all one in Christ.⁵

⁵ Colossians 3:11.

One wishes that it had been religion which had been responsible for gathering the nations together as they are in London while I write these words. At least two things have brought them together. The first is the atomic bomb, and the second is the modern speed of transport and communications. Even a quarter of a century ago, China was in the next town and Italy was in the next street and France lived next door. But now the nations must all live together.

Those who have suffered from the tempers of difficult relatives will quite agree that it is one thing to have a difficult mother-in-law living in Aberdeen while you live in London. It is a very different thing to have a difficult mother-in-law living with you. We need a deeper ethic now that the distance between us is reduced; and the United Nations are not even looking for that ethic or basis. They have been forced together by the calamity of scientific discovery—a calamity because it has outrun the certainty of moral control—but they have no common basis except the necessity of finding one.

I shudder to think what our leading statesmen would say if they were interviewed and told that love was the only possible basis by which the nations of the world could live as a family! Yet, although the word has suffered terribly by being identified in some minds with weakness and in others with sloppy sentimentality, love in operation, in the New Testament sense, is the only hope of a new world. For love means unbreakable good will, readiness to see another point of view, willingness to sacrifice one's own interests, and a mutual desire to serve. The method of argument motivated by a desire to extract a maximum of gain and yield a minimum of concession, or by an arrangement in which one nation says to another, "You let me have this and I'll let you have that, and together we can stand up against any protests," or the continuation of secret diplomacies and power politics disguised to look like co-operation, can only bring us to the abyss.

Quite frankly, the only hope is that a common love for and loyalty to a Person may yet prove stronger than our animosities. This seemed to me well illustrated by an experience of my own during the last war. I was called in to try to make terms on which a man and his wife, who constantly quarreled, might get on better together. After a couple of hours, of course, each had proved that the other was wrong, and negotiations were at their very stickiest when a telegram came. On being opened it was found to contain the good news that George, their son, had already arrived in this country on leave and was not more than a hundred miles

away from their home. In a moment the quarrel disappeared and a most cordial relationship was created. Both parties looked round at me as much as to say, "What are *you* doing here?" and I hastily beat a retreat, leaving them happily co-operating to make a real welcome for George. In a common love for George, who belonged to *both*, they found a basis of co-operation with each other.

The story is not trivial in its message. If the nations could find such a love for and loyalty to a supreme Person who belongs to all nations, this bond could hold them in a unity that would create the world brotherhood which is our only hope. It is the Christian faith that Christ is the only One great enough to supply this need. It is the teaching of the New Testament that he foresaw this and became man that he might become, indeed, the Savior of the world. That is why some of us keep on preaching Christianity. What Keshab Chandar Sen of the Brahmo-Samaj said about India, we would say about the whole world. "None but Jesus ever deserved this bright and precious diadem and he shall have it." Or, as he himself said, "They shall come from the east and the west, and from the north and the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God."

"In the Beginning"

EDGAR J. GOODSPEED

The first sentence in the Old Testament minutely examined by a scholarly New Testament translator—an unusual interpretation advanced.

ONE MORNING more than half a century ago, in Yale Divinity School our young Hebrew professor, William R. Harper, was standing before some fifty beginners in Hebrew, leading us in reciting the first chapter of Genesis in concert. He paused to say, "Some scholars hold that the first words of Genesis should be translated, 'When God began to create the heavens and the earth.'"

It is interesting to observe that the two modern versions of the Old Testament take the words in just that sense. Moffatt (1924) renders: "When God began to form the universe," and Meek, in the American Translation (1927), reads: "When God began to create the heavens and the earth." Some Bible students have received these renderings with ridicule, but they call for serious and candid consideration. What has led these scholars to adopt them?

In the first place, the first word in Genesis, *Beresith*. It occurs, if I remember, forty-five times in the Old Testament, and in eight out of nine of these, or forty times, it means not "In the beginning" but "In-beginning-of." Hebrew students will remember that the sense of "of" is expressed in Hebrew by altering not the following word, as in Greek and Latin, but the preceding one. *Reshith*, however, has the same form whether it means "beginning" or "beginning-of." If *Beresith* was intended to mean "In the beginning," we should have expected the Hebrew to read *Baresith*, although in five instances in the Hebrew Old Testament *Beresith* clearly means "In the beginning."

Is Gen. 1:1 such an instance? The presumption from the prevailing use of the term in Hebrew is against it, by eight to one. Yet it is possible. Did God create the heavens and the earth "In the beginning"?

As we pursue the narrative further, we conclude that he did not, for it goes on to say that he created the heavens on the second day, and the earth on the third. These statements confirm the impression that the first word *Beresith* does not mean "In the beginning," but "In-beginning-of," or as Professor Harper said to us long ago:

"When God began to create the heavens and the earth."

Both the form of the Hebrew and the sense of the passage thus combine to favor this translation.

It is also strongly confirmed by this first Bible narrative, taken as a whole. Interpretation has been gravely misled not only by the way in which the first clause of the story has been translated, but by the cutting short of the narrative at the end of the sixth day, though it is obvious to everybody that the seventh day, now relegated to chapter 2, must have formed an integral part of the narrative from its conception. But when Stephen Langton, about A.D. 1200, made the first chapter end with the sixth day, he left off what is manifestly the climax of the story, and the point for which it was told, viz., the Sabbath on the seventh day. Taken together, the story of the seven days is, of course, the story of the Institution of the Sabbath, which is thus made to appear wrought into the very fabric of the universe. The first of the great narratives of Genesis is not the Creation of the World, but the Institution of the Sabbath. It was made into the narrative of the Creation by leaving off the seventh day. And yet some Bible teachers are so beguiled by this chapter division that they call upon us to study the first chapter of Genesis as a unit! It is not a unit at all, but something less than a unit. It is, in fact, precisely six-sevenths of a unit. It is like calling the first four acts of Hamlet a unit, and forgetting there is also a fifth. And, of course, in Hebrew style, the seventh is the supremely important item. To treat chapter 1 as a unit simply misses the point.

It is gratifying to observe that while for generations the first week-day lesson from the Old Testament in the Book of Common Prayer was Gen. 1, under the influence of the old chapter division, it has now been changed (at least in the American edition since 1928) to Gen. 1: 1-2:3, so as to include the seventh day. The original unity of the old Hebrew narrative is thus restored.

The first line of Genesis, then, is not the title or summary of the story it introduces, for that story is not the Creation, but the Institution of the Sabbath. The first line is simply the starting point of the great story of the Sabbath: "When God began to create the heavens and the earth."

The Hebrews for whom Genesis was written did not need to be told that God created the heavens and the earth; it was a commonplace of their thinking. As well remind them that the sun rose in the east and

set in the west. The Hebrew narrator was integrating their religious institutions with their world view.

The old traditional way of taking the first lines of Genesis did not by any means originate with Luther or Tyndale or the other early Western translators of the Bible. It goes back to the Greek version of the Hebrew Law made in Alexandria in the third century before Christ, which formed the first installment of the Septuagint version. From it was made the ancient Latin version, later revised by Jerome into the Latin Vulgate, and translators into modern tongues have until recent years all followed their interpretation.

To declare with the old translators that God created the earth in the beginning and then to pronounce it without form and void, that is, with neither shape nor substance, is of course the height of inconsistency. If it had neither form nor substance, in what sense had it been created? It sounds more like a way of saying it had not been created. But the inconsistency belongs only to the old translators, with their rudimentary knowledge of Hebrew syntax. It does not belong to the original narrative. For while it is not the translator's business to make himself the apologist of the ancient writer, it is his business to make sense of what he finds written, just as far as the best modern knowledge of Hebrew permits. For he is not dealing with a group of pious, unsophisticated ancients, innocent of the techniques of literature, but with a body of highly accomplished literary artists, whose powers of expression were by no means limited to the Simple Sentence.

Yet Hebrew poverty in conjunctions led that ancient people to use the conjunction "wa"—"and"—in a variety of ways which cannot be adequately represented by the English word "and." A favorite instance is Gen. 19:23, which might be literally translated:

The sun rose upon the earth and Lot went into Zoar.

But all the English translators have seen that "and" is no adequate translation for "wa" in this sentence, and long before King James they were rendering it:

And the sun was now risen upon the earth, when Lot went into Zoar, or as the King James Version read it:

The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

There is no reason to doubt that "wa" means "when" in this sentence, and makes what follows a subordinate clause.

This is also true of the same conjunction in Gen. 1:2:

When the earth was a desolate waste, and darkness covered the deep

The next clause is the most difficult in the whole sentence. For one thing the Hebrews used the same word for "wind" and "spirit," and it seems odd to speak of God himself as speaking, while his spirit is at the same time roaming over the waters. It is certainly strange and confusing, as though God was doing one thing while God's spirit was doing another.

It may be remarked that the expression "spirit of God" occurs only once elsewhere in Genesis, in 41:38, where Pharaoh is assuring his courtiers that "the (or a) spirit of God" is in Joseph. In fact, the expression used in Gen. 1:2 occurs only ten times elsewhere in the Old Testament: once in Genesis, twice in Exodus, once in Numbers, four times in First Samuel, once in Second Chronicles, and once in Ezekiel. A similar expression in Job uses two other forms for God, different from the one used here and from each other, 27:3, 33:4. The expression "the spirit of God" was by no means as familiar among the Hebrews as it is with us.¹

But if we translate "wind of God" instead of "spirit of God," what meaning would result? Here it must be remembered that when the Hebrews wished to represent a thing or experience as superlative they sometimes simply added "of God" to it. In Gen. 30:8 Rachel's "great wrestlings" with her sister is in the Hebrew "wrestlings of God." The Great Bible, the first authorized English Bible, called it "godly wrestlings"; the Bishops', the second authorized, called it "godly wrastlynges," at least in the second edition of 1572. The King James of 1611 saw nothing "godly" in Rachel's devices and called it "great wrastlings," giving the literal "wrestlings of God" in the margin.² The American Revised Version of 1901 translates it "mighty wrestlings," as do the American Rabbis in their edition of 1917. No one thinks of going back to a literal translation for this phrase.

This strange usage appears also in the Psalms, where in 36:6 "the mountains of God" was translated literally by the Vulgate (*montes dei*) and by Luther (*die Berge Gottes*) but not by Coverdale (1535), who

¹ Professor John P. Peters many years ago reckoned the uses of *ruach* in the Hebrew Old Testament as follows: (1) wind, 117 times; (2) breath, 58 times; (3) spirit, 76 times; and (4) spirit (of God, of Yahweh, or alone), 94 times. (*Journal of Biblical Literature*, xxx, 1911, 44f.) Professor Meek has kindly called my attention to this article. Peters concludes that "there is no passage in which the word has the sense given to it in the ordinary translations of Gen. 1:2."

² My paternal grandfather, who grew up in New York State a hundred and twenty-five years ago, with little schooling, and was quite a wrestler in his youth, always called it "wrestling," which I considered a blemish in his speech. But it now appears from the Bishops' and King James that Grandfather's English diction was more authentic than my own.

translated "the stronge mountaynes." This carried over into the Great Bible (1539). The next authorized version, the Bishops' (1568), read "the mountaines of God," but the King James Version (1611) turned back toward Coverdale: "the great mountaines," with "Hebr. the mountaines of God" in the margin. The American Standard Version (1901) revives the Bishops' reading, "the mountains of God," but the Rabbis (1917) read "the mighty mountains." Professor Moffatt translates "mighty mountains" (1924), while my college Professor Smith renders "the highest mountains" (1927).

A similar expression, "the cedars of God" in Psalms 80:10, was translated by Coverdale "the stronge Cedre trees." It was rendered in the first authorized Bible, the Great, "the goodly Cedre (or Cedar) trees." The Bishops' changed this to "goodly high Cedar trees," with "the Cedar trees of God" in the margin. The King James Version went back toward the Great's reading, and read "the goodly cedars," with a note in the margin, "Hebr. the Cedars of God." The American Standard (1901) says "cedars of God"; the Rabbis (1917), "the mighty cedars," and so Moffatt (1924). Professor Smith read "the cedars of God" (1927). It will be seen that this simple Hebrew idiom has sharply divided versions and translators for quite four hundred years.

Akin to it is the use of the name of God in an elative or superlative sense with adjectives. In Jonah 3:3 Nineveh is said in the Hebrew to have been "a city great to God." The Great Bible translated "a great citye unto God." The Bishops' (1568, 1572, etc.) rendered "a great city, and excellent," with this note in the margin: "In the Hebrue it is a great citie to God: but so the Hebrues cal great and excellent things. So the hyl of God, the Cedar of God, for a great hyl and high Cedar." The King James Version in 1611 read "Nineveh was an exceeding great city," with this strange marginal note on "exceeding": "Heb. of God." I know of no such Hebrew reading, nor did the makers of the Bishops' Bible, as their careful note shows. Modern forms of King James do not correct this note but add to it, "So Gen. 30:8; Ps. 36:6, and 80:10"—just the passages we have been examining. The makers of King James here seem to have misunderstood the Bishops' note and neglected to look at the Hebrew for themselves.

And it is true that the "great unto God" idiom has much basically in common with "the mountaines of God," "Cedars of God," "wrestlings of God," to suggest unutterable greatness and majesty. An instance of this appears in Acts 7:20, where the infant Moses is described as "fair

unto God," though neither the Hebrew nor the Septuagint of Exod. 2:2 sustain that reading. A similar idiom occurs in II Cor. 10:4; Paul describes the weapons he uses as "strong to God," or "divinely strong."

In the light of all this, it seems reasonable to conclude that "wind of God" in Gen. 1:2 very probably means "a mighty wind." And this is supported by the following participle, usually translated "moving." This is a strange word to use of the spirit of God, which can hardly need to move from place to place. It does indeed enter men's hearts, but that is not a physical motion. And the word translated "moving" is a strong one. It is used by Jeremiah, in 23:9, to describe the shaking of his bones: "All my bones shake," and also in Deut. 32:11 of an eagle "fluttering over her young," or "dashing against its brood" (an American translation)—to get them to try their wings. These stronger senses of the verb are even more inappropriate to the spirit of God, and strongly favor the other sense of the word *ruach*, "wind," rather than "spirit," and the translation, "a tempestuous wind raging over the surface of the waters."

So understood, the second verse reads:

When the earth was a desolate waste, and darkness covered the deep, and a fearful wind was raging over the face of the waters . . .

This is what the Greeks called Chaos—a black waste of waters ravaged by wind and storm. But into it comes the voice of God:

Then, God said, "Let there be light!" And there was light.

This is the climax of the scene. The first step is not the creation of the heavens and the earth in vs. 1; to put it there ruins the narrative. The first step in creation is the creation of light, in place of the universal darkness. I find it full of meaning that the first sentence of the Bible should end thus. Compared with it, the old translation is pedestrian and dull. The Bible does not begin, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." It begins far more significantly and dramatically.

When God began to create the heavens and the earth, when the earth was formless and void, and darkness covered the deep, and a fearful wind was raging over the face of the waters, then God said,

"Let there be light!"
and there was light.

This is the noble sentence with which Genesis begins, and it strikes the keynote of the Bible.

The Preacher—A Bridge Builder

FREDERICK E. MASER

A threefold approach to building a bridge, through preaching, from a congregation's daily experiences to the supreme experience of knowing God.

PEOPLE LONG to know God. They are searching for a satisfying experience of religion. They are seeking a spiritual power that can change and redeem them; and yet, in many instances, they are failing to find it. Harry Emerson Fosdick quotes a prominent layman who said in an impassioned confession: "I have been a member of the church for all twenty-five years since I was baptized. Why hasn't anything vital ever happened to me?"¹ And Arthur John Gossip says in his frank way, "There are many who look wistfully towards the religious life, but have not an idea how to set about it."²

With whom lies the fault? No answer will be complete, but in part at least our answer is here: the preacher, himself, often fails to build a bridge for his people from their daily experiences—across their disillusionments and despair—to the supreme experience of knowing God. Each week through the sermon the minister has an opportunity of building this bridge over which he can take his people to the very heart of the Eternal. If the sermon fails of that purpose, it fails of its main object and becomes an essay, a speech, or an oration—pretty, even helpful, but not worthy to warrant the attention of several hundred seekers who come each Sunday longing for the very thing the message fails to give—an experience with God.

In building an adequate bridge, now, there are three factors, like great arches, which must form the sweep and foundation for the superstructure. They are, in a word, Mastery, Simplicity, and Passion.

I

By Mastery, I mean that before a preacher can adequately set forth eternal truth he must grasp as fully as possible the doctrines through which that truth is expressed. He must have come to grips with the problems and difficulties in the very truth he is proclaiming. He must understand and, in no careless fashion, seek to resolve the dilemmas his

¹ *The Hope of the World*, Harper and Brothers, 1933, p. 154.

² *From the Edge of the Crowd*, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930, p. 294.

people are facing in the great issues of life and death. He must get a knowledge of God. In short, he must become a master theologian.

It is at this point that modern preaching often fails. Many pulpiteers are good psychologists, inspiring orators, attractive homilists, keen commentators on current events, but fail as theologians. If one calls the roll of the great preachers of other generations one will discover that they were not only masters at the art of sermonizing and speaking but also masters in their knowledge of theology. The Apostle Paul, St. Augustine, Savonarola, John Huss, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Charles Whitefield, John Wesley, John Knox, and a host of others fall into this category.

To illustrate what I mean in another way, I refer to the Storrs Lectures of 1936, published under the title *The Higher Learning in America* and delivered by President Robert Maynard Hutchins of the University of Chicago. The heart of his thesis is that thought must be brought once again under the direction of a rational and practical ordering principle. He looks, unfortunately, to metaphysics rather than to theology to secure this end.

In the following year President John A. Mackay in his inaugural address at Princeton Seminary³ called attention to President Hutchins' lectures and then proceeded to set forth theology as the only source which "will produce great philosophy on the one hand and great religion on the other."

The preacher, now, is being called upon to do for his people what President Hutchins and President Mackay feel needs to be done for higher learning; namely, to ground them in those first principles which give life its security, purpose, and meaning. For that reason I say that to be an orator, a homilist, a commentator on current events is not enough. Every preacher must have his mind steeped in great theology—a theology which, to use Dr. Mackay's figure, will bring to a focus the rays of revelation that are coming to us through the Bible and, more clearly, through the Living Christ, and which will transmit those rays, as undimmed as possible, across every phase of the life of man.

This explains what has often been noted in religious history, that the little Protestant sects attain in their incipency a remarkable growth. Many explanations have been suggested for this phenomenon. Part of the answer is found in the minds of the men who break away from

³ *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, Vol. XXXI, No. 1, April, 1937, p. 7.

organized denominations. These men, by their leap, have been forced to rethink the doctrines upon which they now stand. They achieve a theology which acts as a unifying principle for the confusion of their minds and becomes a part of the bridge they build in their weekly sermons to take their people into the presence of God. In many cases their theology is inadequate or incomplete, and, after reaching a certain growth the sect languishes or dies. But it is the theology that gave the movement its initial drive.

I realize, now, that I have gone rather far without making clear my definition of theology or without attempting, in even the smallest measure, to elaborate that theology which I feel is adequate and complete enough to meet the needs of men. In an article of but a brief span it is impossible to fulfill these requirements.

Let us, however, think of theology as a science which deals with a body of specially revealed truth which it must intellectually organize and appropriately apply to the varying problems of each generation. Using this definition for our immediate purpose, I have been saying that unless a preacher is possessed by an adequate revelation—a revelation which he feels is from God—and unless he comes to grips with its meaning, and understands it in the light of the dilemmas and needs of his people, he cannot begin to fulfill the function of his office.

This is, indeed, a tough, difficult, and oftentimes thankless task. It is far easier to offer each Sunday some sprightly comment on the world situation or a Christian criticism of our favorite radio commentator. It is much simpler to digest a few good books on elementary or abnormal psychology and dose our people with practical exhortations on "how to relax." But is this our task? Barth reminds us that when our people "come to us for help they do not really want to learn more about *living*: they want to learn more about what is on the farther edge of living—*God*."⁴ Barth, I feel, is right. And not until we have wrestled with that strange, puzzling, though at times radiantly clear revelation of God and man which we find in the Bible; not until we have faced its paradoxes and pondered its seeming contradictions; not until we have wept because our finite minds fail to understand and our imperfect sight is blinded by the brilliance of Eternal Light; yea, not until by an act of faith we seize that One greater than all, who in turn possesses us through the Holy Spirit, dare we stand up to preach. And then, when, after all this,

⁴ *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, The Pilgrim Press, 1928, p. 189.

we do dare to preach, it will not be in the strength of men but of God, and our theme will center in that One, whom above all else our people are seeking and longing to know—God.

II

By Simplicity, the second arch for the superstructure of the sermon, I mean expressing truth in the plainest of everyday terms. Failure at this point is tragic. What is more pathetic than to hear an earnest-minded layman say of his minister, "He is a wonderful man and, I suppose, a great preacher; I just don't seem to be able to understand what he is talking about." Or to hear that oft-repeated remark, "He is over our heads." Whatever other charge was made against Jesus, it was never said that the crowds left him because they could not understand what he was saying. Even the common soldiers understood him and proclaimed in admiration, "Never man spake like this man."

The preacher who has not mastered Simplicity will often feel a sense of isolation while he is preaching, as though his people listened as to a person speaking in an unknown tongue. And often he does speak as one from another country. His language is different, his vocabulary is foreign, he seems to dwell in another world.

When we turn to the New Testament, we discover that its writers were expert at expressing themselves in a language easily understood by the common people. They wrote in the *koine*, the everyday language of the time. It was only in the present century, however, that scholars reached this conclusion. Heretofore it was thought that the language of the New Testament was especially contrived for the single purpose of setting forth the biblical documents. A brief but comprehensive survey of the matter is written by Dr. A. T. Robertson in the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*.⁵ Dr. Robertson points out that as late as 1892 the following quotation appeared in the fourth edition of Cremer's *Biblico-theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek*:

We may appropriately speak of a language of the Holy Ghost. For in the Bible it is evident that the Holy Spirit has been at work, moulding for itself a distinctly religious mode of expression out of the language of the country which it has chosen as its sphere, and transforming the linguistic elements which it found ready at hand, and even conceptions already existing, into a shape and form appropriate to itself and all its own. [Cremer adds,] We have a very clear and striking proof of this in NT Greek.

⁵ "Language of the New Testament," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Howard Severance Co., 1930, Vol. III, p. 1827.

Out of a statement like this there would naturally grow the idea that religious language and thought are something entirely separate from everyday language and thought, and that the sermon itself must be cast in a special mold to do honor to God. Nothing is further from the truth.

Instead of attempting to invent a language for the Holy Spirit, the writers of the New Testament used the language they found current among the masses to express the eternal truths the Holy Spirit revealed to them. This is an important point, for it sets a precedent for the speech of the modern preacher and makes it incumbent upon him to preach with the same striking simplicity that is characteristic of the New Testament writers. And it is significant that this is what the most outstanding of our present-day pulpiteers are doing.

In "Where Enemies Enter Not"—a sermon in the book *Now to Live*^a—Dr. Ralph Sockman with a few plain sentences illuminates a whole avenue of approach to the problem of evil and suffering. "The psalmist does not say, 'I will *meet* no evil: for thou art with me.' No, he says, 'I will *fear* no evil: for thou art with me.' The misfortune may come. The sickness may fall. But God gives us the grace and strength to use what we call evils and transform them into our servants."

A casual reading, moreover, of the best sermons today illustrates that profound thought and plain speech are requisites for great preaching. Too often the average sermon fails in both respects.

Protestantism depends for its propagation upon a clear, direct preachment which can be intellectually understood and emotionally appreciated. Without this, Protestantism has little to offer in place of the Catholic Mass; and where the preacher, by his obscure or technical language or by his failure to possess an adequate theology, is unable to fulfill his task the church becomes spiritually impoverished to the point where it possesses only the form of religion but lacks real or transforming power.

III

But besides showing mastery and simplicity, the sermon must be shot through with Passion. Passion is the fire that illuminates the intellectual body of the discourse. Passion is the power that enables the preacher to wing his thoughts high into the sun of truth. It was in the white heat of intense passion that Paul wrote his great doxologies, gave to the world his poem on love, assured men that nought could separate

^a *Now to Live*, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946, p. 41.

them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, and hammered out on the anvil of thought his tremendous concepts of God and the Atonement and the Resurrection. Without passion, our preaching becomes dull, and our sermons, harmless homilies.

Passion enables a man to preach as though it were a matter of life and death to his hearers whether they received his truth or not. It was that spirit which characterized the preaching of the apostles. James Denney in his volume *The Death of Christ* presents the matter admirably:

[The preaching of the disciples] though it is never overbearing or unjust, though it never tries to intimidate men, or (as one may sometimes have been tempted to think in a mission service) to bully them into their faith, is as urgent and passionate as the sense of the atoning death can make it. . . . To be a Christian, or not to be a Christian is not a matter of comparative indifference; it is not the case of being a somewhat better man, or a man, perhaps, not quite so good; it is a case of life or death.⁷

Passion like this is not the result of a temporary exhilaration or a momentary feeling inspired by the mood of the hour; it is a deep, sustained concern for the redemption of mankind and for the coming of the Kingdom of God, and it is supported by a vital faith, illuminated by a glorious hope, and made real through the abiding presence of Jesus Christ.

Here, then, is the last of the three great arches—Mastery, Simplicity, and Passion—upon whose broad sweep every adequate sermon must be built. Across this foundation the preacher must lay out his sermon like a bridge to lead his listeners from their barren island of selfishness and despair over the troubled waters of life and the disillusionments of the world into the very presence of God. And this must be done not once nor twice, but constantly—week after week, year after year—for the ministry is a continuing calling.

What I have said, therefore, emphasizes the fact that the task of the preacher as a bridge builder is no easy one. It requires of the preacher both work and prayer as well as a sympathetic understanding of the needs of his people; but, above all, it requires that he, himself, know the God of whom he speaks and possess a like compassion with him for a lost world. In the end, it requires a devotion to truth and a love for mankind and a loyalty to his Lord which will make a man willing to be crucified with Christ and to pour out his life in unremitting toil that those to whom he preaches may enjoy the supreme experience of knowing God.

⁷ *The Death of Christ*, A. C. Armstrong and Son, New York, 1903, p. 310.

Secularism in the College

CLYDE A. HOLBROOK

*Secularism in the college reflects the secularism of western culture—
author suggests ways in which the colleges may
approach the problem.*

STORM SIGNALS are out for American colleges. Criticisms for their failure to encourage the teaching and practice of the Christian faith are flying. Some censure comes from those who are convinced that American colleges are infested by faculties who connive to undermine the budding religious faith of students. But from more judicious critics come reproaches which cannot easily be evaded. Speaking before the annual meeting of the Association of American Colleges, Archbishop Cushing, Roman Catholic, and Dr. George A. Buttrick, Presbyterian, laced higher education for its neglect of the resources of the Christian religion. Dr. Buttrick threatened that "the colleges must become religious or . . . the churches must once more become centers of education."¹ The Archbishop asserted that "our schools and colleges have lost all their religious tone and content in the sense that their tone may once have been Christian."² The tenor of their remarks was sustained by Mr. Roger L. Shinn, who reported that campus life was in a state of confusion, as education led students "into an enlarged view of the world which often seems to have no place for religion."³

Nor have educators themselves been satisfied with affairs as they stand. The report of the Committee on Religion in Education, lately issued by the American Council on Education, points a growing uneasiness by expressing concern for the corrosive effects of secularism, as mediated through our public schools and colleges, upon human character. And anyone who serves as religious advisor or instructor on the campus knows that sooner or later he will be caught in a crossfire from those who believe that only a reactionary theology can resuscitate the expiring religious and moral life of the campus, and from those hard-bitten secularists who feel that greater emphasis upon religion would merely herald the return of sectarianism, obscurantism, and loss of precious academic

¹ Association of American Colleges, *Bulletin*, March, 1947, p. 40.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

³ Roger L. Shinn, "Confusion in the Colleges," in *The Christian Century*, June 18, 1947, p. 762.

freedom. Whoever is caught in this position has good reason to know that all is far from tranquil in the halls of higher learning.

I

The religious and moral problem before the colleges moves upon at least two levels; namely, the academic and the practical. The academic issue concerns the place and value of formal religious instruction at the college level. An appalling religious illiteracy exists in our student populations, a fact which demonstrates the ineffectiveness of both formal and informal religious education at precollege stages. The same illiteracy points to a false dichotomy by which, under the aegis of the doctrine of the separation of church and state, religion has been dissociated from its rightful place in public and college education.

However much the colleges themselves are to blame for this condition,⁴ the fact remains that a major responsibility devolves upon a mood common in America, which quietly entertains the fallacy that a person may be educated although almost totally lacking in familiarity with the religious faith which has shaped him and his world. Yet purely from the academic side, it is erroneous to assume that the complete story of man's development can be written in terms of his literature, science, political and economic institutions, with scarcely a mention of the moral and spiritual values which he has sought or denied through these media.

Our colleges have reflected this mood in a variety of ways. Justly suspicious of creeds, and anxious for the rights of impartial truth-seeking, college faculties and administrations have sometimes regarded religion as essentially a narrowing experience, rather than an emancipative one. The "value-free" approach of the natural sciences, aped by the social sciences, has been coupled with this reaction against religion, and the consequences have been formidable. The ideals of objectivity and rigid impartiality practiced in the various sciences have been at odds with the frankly value-centered approach of religious faith. This espousal of academic impartiality has produced excellent intensive scholarship, but it has concealed a fundamental intellectual naïveté. The social sciences, failing to recognize that their selection of so-called facts is accomplished from the standpoint of presupposed values, often uncrit-

⁴ I would not minimize the college's shortcomings, but Dr. Buttrick's lopsided dictum that our present world difficulties can unequivocally be placed at the door of education is hard to take. Cf. *Association of American Colleges, Bulletin, op. cit.*, p. 39. It is only fair to recall that religious forces are also to blame for the debacle. "The immediate cause of the exclusion of religious teaching from the schools was sectarian conflict." "Relation of Religion to Public Education," American Council on Education, *Studies, Series I, No. 26*, p. 6.

ically accepted, have helped to spread an outlook which can properly be called secularism. Their supposedly value-free view of human experience turns out upon analysis to be a disguised faith, which, when transmitted to students, creates the impression that human history is a miraculous conglomeration of miscellaneous events, essentially purposeless, because the values about which these events cluster are often omitted as having no historical efficacy. Thus in the name of scholarly disinterestedness, secularism is pumped back into a community already surfeited with it.

The college problem moves on a second level also, that of the moral conduct of its students. Repeatedly charges are heard that college students are immoral, that they indulge in promiscuous sex relations, drunkenness, cheating, and other types of private knavery. In the wider range of ethics, it is charged that college students are easily satisfied by a round of beer-busts, fraternity parties, etc., showing little or no sense of social responsibility for broader issues.

Without becoming guilty of special pleading, we may note that the accusation of a break-up of personal morals in the first category refers precisely to the sins about which our culture is likely to be most sensitive, inasmuch as it makes free with them. So far as the charge is sustained against college students, it is also true of the community at large. The collective ego of society swells in self-justification when it can censoriously identify some group or institution where its own moral delinquencies can be publicized without endangering the prestige of the community at large. Protestations about moral conditions on the campus are sometimes rightfully suspect as rationalizations for the failures of social institutions to deal effectively with similar shortcomings. We seldom hear of fraternal orders or churches of the major denominations exercising the type of discipline over personal morals which some members of these groups insist the colleges should carry out. It is easier to play the judge than the redeemer.

As to the second category of charges, it is first of all fair to suggest that certain vested interests in our society may criticize students for their social irresponsibility, but at the same time actually prefer that students remain quiet about awkward issues, e.g., race relations, labor unions, compulsory military training, business practices, the use of the atomic bomb, or world peace. It does not take too observant an eye to see that when criticisms or comments on such issues emanate from the college, they are regarded as interference in the affairs of a larger world of

which faculty and students are supposedly innocent. The reverse direction of criticism, however, is deemed a righteous fulfillment of civic and moral responsibility. The charge that students lack a sense of responsibility for community and world problems is partially true, but nevertheless misleading. American youth has already learned from its elders the lesson of social indifference, detrimental as it is to democratic procedures. Concern for fateful social issues is probably no more widespread in student bodies than in the community. While it certainly does not appear that our colleges are becoming hotbeds of revolution, yet the questions which deeply trouble the consciences of our thinking students are these very issues of national and world concern. Such problems are seldom framed in the context of a Christian ethic, but secularized conditioning rules out this possibility. Students live under the threat of ominous social dislocations, and anyone who talks for more than a moment with them realizes how keenly they are aware of it.⁵ Nor can we dismiss the contributions which many students make who wrestle with these problems.

II

Understanding the campus religious and ethical problem first depends, then, upon recognizing it as a part of the whole spiritual and ethical impasse in which Western man finds himself. "Confusion in the colleges," as Mr. Shinn has called it, springs legitimately from confusion off the campus. Essentially there is no college problem which is not at the same time, and perhaps in a more devastating degree, the problem of society. The second prerequisite to the understanding of the campus situation is the identification of this religio-ethical problem which college and community share. Although no one statement may be taken as definitive, for purposes of simplicity the issue may be stated as follows: Western man has largely lost a sense of the powerful relevance of the divine moral order to his existence, and consequently has also lost incentive to conform to it. He does not discern in human relations a coercive moral orderliness beyond that which society demands. He lacks capacity for that spiritual discernment which can appreciate the differences between truth and untruth, justice and injustice, love and lust. Scientifically, politically, and economically he deals with "fact"; ethically, however, he finds himself wandering in a morass of subjective opinions, no one of which seems universally coercive. To undertake or

⁵ Cf. e.g., *Time*, June 16, 1947, p. 30.

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refuse to undertake a given course of action upon ethical grounds now appears to him unutterably naïve, or seems an indication of some devious and sinister motive underlying this naïveté. He is confused about truth, for has he not learned that man rationalizes his subliminal drives and glorifies the end-product as "truth"? He forgets that the judgment that men do so rationalize must be itself either a rationalization or dependent for its validity upon some objective ground. The ethical relativism of modern secularism needs little documentation. Man recognizes no power exerted against a purely arbitrary construction placed upon honesty, truth, justice, pride, etc.

It is natural, in such a view of morals, to come to the point where the vital concerns of man are dissociated, as ethics already has been, from any religious sanction. If spiritual and moral values cannot assert themselves as fact, they are irrelevant—though they may attain the vacuous immortality of "ideals." In this separation of human life from the divine moral order, we come close to the essence of humanistic secularism: it wrenches life from its cosmic foundation, and cuts the nerve of incentive for assuming moral responsibility to a Being or order which is vastly more than the product of human expediency.

Yet it is this same world of moral relativity which today is out-starred by chaos. Societies, those mysterious entities from which alone we were supposed to have derived our moral standards, are themselves in parlous straits. No human court decided that their repeated denials of human dignity, their crude racialisms, their prideful grasp for power, should eventuate in total war, economic confusion, and human suffering; but now it appears, to those who have the wit to see, that the same factors which, when practiced within societies, bring chaos and disintegration are busy producing identical results among nations. Honor, trustworthiness, justice, and truth, moral relativists to the contrary notwithstanding, appear to have more than provincial or national significance. Can it be that there is an order and a will with which man is faced, which he can neither repudiate nor dominate?

We have no reason to suppose that the college is immune to the effects of this secularistic relativism. The preoccupation with success of some sort, technological gadgetry, and the blandishments of a sensate culture, are pursued at the expense of moral integrity by the college student because society has generally impressed its youth with the social acceptability and necessity of these attitudes. As one observant professor has pointed out, "No matter what we may pretend to teach in home,

school, college, or church, the young will learn only that which offers them an incentive in life. Under present conditions that incentive seems to be only material success and material satisfaction."⁶ Furthermore, in war, the finishing school of secularism, we have developed profound disturbances in moral and psychological balance in our youth, which as yet have not come to full expression.

The colleges meet this whole problem in an acute form. The great influx of students, especially veterans, has greatly taxed all college facilities. No other civilian institution has been called upon to deal with the veterans en masse, both during and after the war. Large institutions have an increase of 68.9 per cent over the 1939 fall enrollment, and independent colleges of arts and sciences are faced with a 54.9 per cent increase.⁷ The colleges have responded to this unprecedented situation as best they were able. Sheer mass of students has altered the campus scene. Hitherto steady personal relations between faculty members and students have become more impersonal; cherished traditions, some of which at least were beneficial in maintaining student morale, have frequently been junked. To the tensions common to normal undergraduate living have been added those of the veteran.

The question is not "how does the veteran accommodate to the rest of the student body?" but "how do the nonveterans adjust to the veterans?" Of course, neither group is reacting to a condition of prewar "normality." The veteran himself is psychologically changed, and with his change he has transformed the college. Nor does the nonveteran who comes to the campus know what administrators are speaking of when they mention "normality." He realizes soon that he has not undergone the "great experience," and that he must win his status in relation to those who have. After the initial shock between the standards of nonveteran men and women on the one hand and veterans on the other, the line between the two groups fades rapidly as differences in moral, academic, and social attitudes are compromised. But to a great extent, for weal or woe, the present temper is set by the veteran.

The veteran's impact on the religious and ethical life of the campus is difficult to assess fairly. He brings a mature view about everything from sex to world problems, which the undergraduate who has come by way of high or preparatory school does not customarily share. He

⁶ Mathurin Dondo, "Do the Humanities Humanize?" in *American Association of University Professors Bulletin*, Vol. 33, No. 1, p. 143.

⁷ Association of American Colleges, *Bulletin*, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

tends to be realistic about human nature, sometimes to the point of cynicism, for his maturity has too often been attained from the distorted insights into human life which the barracks, battlefield, and brothel offer. He may be dogmatic about the impossibility of transforming human life, yet he is found in movements which can be of no immediate personal benefit. If no widespread passion for social or religious reform has emerged from the veterans' ranks, it is nevertheless true that he reminds us of the need for a soberer understanding of the limits within which any reform can hopefully operate. When a casualness about relations between the sexes is noted on the part of unmarried veterans, we cannot justifiably point to the veteran as an immoral type. It is not the veteran, but Western man, who has torn sex out of its proper locus in the Christian view, and permitted it to become enthroned as an idol of human life. The campus inherits not only this existing crisis in sexual and family morals, but also the results of a military experience which has exposed men to a coarse opportunism under semiofficial auspices. Again, when it is noted that many veterans drink, and thereby make themselves a problem for nondrinking students and for administrative policy, we cannot leap to the conclusion that the veteran is single-handedly responsible. The cocked arm and supercilious glance of the "man of distinction" is not the handiwork of the veteran mind. The cult of alcoholism, by assuming the form of petty custom, has insinuated itself into the texture of social graciousness, thereby putting itself beneath the dignity of ethical consideration proper.

The veteran is in a hurry to finish his academic preparation, and his earnest application to studies usually results in superior grades. His impatience with much of college horseplay, his demand for frank answers from professors, and his outspoken criticism of course materials and teaching methods have a salutary effect upon the campus. Yet his cocksure haste does not always reckon with the soberer counsel of his advisors.

In spite of his studious concentration, the veteran is haunted by the same questions of life's ultimate meaning as his noncollegiate counterpart. He has the same uneasiness about the point of human life that any other thinking man feels. He is looking for something, for what he is not sure. He has undergone a forcing experience, by which life has become a more serious and baffling affair. His encounter with the moral and spiritual inadequacies of secularism has forced him to question the purpose of life, while at the same time, the ethical relativism which springs from this secularism prevents his acceptance of any answer as

intellectually or spiritually satisfying. As a product of our culture, he has been cut off from any objective source of values in terms of which he can determine whether or not he has found a true answer to his questions. Secularism at once causes him to seek a meaningful goal and precludes his finding it.

III

What can the colleges do? It becomes reasonably clear that there are two things which the colleges cannot be expected to do. They cannot completely recover the ground lost at precollege levels, in familiarity with the religious heritage of the Western world. Nor have they much hope of immediately making good the spiritual and moral vacuum left in thousands of lives which have been immersed in the secularism of our time. These negative conclusions, however, are preliminary to pointing the more modest responsibilities of American colleges, for although religious faith cannot be forced, it may be evoked under proper conditions.

Colleges, whether nominally Christian or not, whose leadership has awakened to the fact that the crisis of Western man is vastly more than scientific or economic, should be expected to take more vigorous steps in the transmission of the religious and ethical culture of the West, and for the strengthening of those influences and agencies on the campus (Wesley Foundations, Canterbury Clubs, Student Christian Associations, among others) which give promise of effectively assisting students in the understanding and practice of the Christian life. It must be presupposed that the college administration and faculty themselves take a firm and defensible stand for basic human decencies and encourage by both formal and informal means the students' practice of them. The power of administrative and faculty moral leadership is hard to overestimate.⁸

Wherever feasible, constructive influences may be brought to bear in joint faculty, administration, and student committees, where both sides can sense the temper and attitudes of the other. The student comes to feel the support of those who are responsible for the institution, and the officials themselves find that student leadership responds to their interest. On every campus there are students, including veterans, who by a variety of gifts stand out, commanding the respect of their fellow students for their moral integrity. Their leadership is indispensable—

⁸ "There is no substitute for official concern, and no agency will be so effective as a body of men and women on the faculty who care about the ultimate ends of life, and who in class and out, are prepared to stand up and be counted." Cf. "Relation of Religion to Public Education," *op. cit.*, p. 42.

so long as it is not jeopardized by the overzealous attentions of the administration. There are faculty members who are especially gifted at meeting students at the level of their most pressing needs. These professors should, wherever possible, be relieved of certain teaching duties so that their counseling abilities will have the widest possible play. Inadequate faculty salaries and the inordinate pressure of teaching duties at this time are not conducive to the acceptance of this responsibility, but such agencies as the Hazen and Danforth foundations have done excellent service in providing supplementary grants to qualified professors.

The task of the religious counselor proper is not an easy one. He must be sensitive as a listener, yet not sentimentally sympathetic. He must be able to articulate the student's problem without giving the impression that his task is finished by pronouncing moral censure. He must have a broad honesty which meets the student's problem on its own merit, rather than in terms of the predetermined answer from some denominational program or theological perspective. The student must be enabled to feel that the issue is a problem in which his personal decision is critical, yet that a fund of insight is being brought to bear upon his experience which the counselor has derived from similar cases.

Whatever else is true about the informal approach to campus religious and moral problems, this fact remains basic, that approaches and programs must take their starting point from the students' felt needs. There is no call to go to the extreme of a student-centered program, which merely reflects the immediate and often vagrant student interest, without allowance for that growth in appreciations which is essential to the realization of the Christian life; but without a beginning made where the student is, little hope is afforded for that advance.

For example, sometimes we cannot begin with theological considerations as such, but with more basic moral issues, for it is exactly at this level that many students' problems are formulated.⁹ It is not enough to offer religious faith, to students who lack knowledge of that reality in which they are told they should have faith. The lost sense of the power of the moral order must first be rehabilitated before their confidence is won for the pronouncements of religious views which otherwise appear arbitrary. How can we say that a religious faith is "good"

⁹ Mr. Shinn's experience in finding that the terminology of a certain type of Protestant theology had no meaning for the college students with whom he was speaking points up the difficulty. His apparent reluctance to offer something "objective," i.e., something the common intelligence could grasp without the esoteric appeal to faith, leads to disillusionment for students, not because faith is not theologically basic, but because the student does not primarily conceive his problem in Mr. Shinn's terms. Cf. *The Christian Century*, op. cit., p. 763.

or "true" without appeal to this ethical structure? If there are no ethical distinctions comprehensible to human reason, then there is little cause to ask students to embrace a theological outlook which by-passes these very distinctions. Recognition of the intelligible moral nature of life is the inescapable foundation upon which a religious view may be constructed, and to which it must make appeal for the spiritual life.

On the formal side, the college can further fulfill its responsibility by continuing to encourage students, through its advisory systems, to take intellectually defensible religion courses, taught by trained and vigorous instructors. These courses should not be regarded as "rounding-out" or "fill-in" courses, but as opportunities provided for the exploration of the basic issues of man's existence. Granted that religion courses are no panacea, and that there are as weak and negligible offerings in religion as in English literature or sociology, yet when properly taught, they are the irreducible minima by means of which religious values may be given a hearing. Often they help to make good the inadequacies of church and public-school education, and students are occasionally reached whom the church has not touched, nor shows much hope of touching. If secularism has been transmitted by means of college courses, why cannot we reasonably expect that some reversal of attitude may be brought about by the same means? If not, what alternative is left, either to the college, or for that matter, to the churches, when and if they should take over education, pursuant to Dr. Buttrick's suggestion?

There is more to be done beyond the religion course as such. Even when these courses are given respectable positions in the curriculum, and prominence by the advisory system, they labor under the handicap of the label "religious." Psychologically they are set apart from other studies, as our public-school training has taught us to expect, for a cordón sanitaire has been thrown about them by popular opinion. The need, then, obviously lies in bringing both ethical and religious considerations into closer, natural associations with other fields of study, in showing the interpenetration of religious and moral factors with other cultural forces, and especially of providing a framework or a synoptic view of these affiliated areas.¹⁰ The cafeteria-style education of the past, what-

¹⁰ Graham Wallas in his *The Great Society* pointed out the practical importance of this integrative work some time ago when he said: "We are forced now to recognize that a society whose intellectual direction consists only of unrelated specialisms must drift. . . . we feel that neither the sectional observations of the special student nor the ever-accumulating records of the past, nor the narrow experience of the practical man can suffice us. We must let our minds play freely over all the conditions of life till we can either justify our civilization or change it." p. 15.

ever its benefits, operated upon the optimistic supposition that given a variety of courses, the students' minds automatically synthesized these offerings, and by some miracle, the miscellaneous knowledge acquired became a philosophy of life or a world outlook. What often happened was that the student chose one field as normative for the others—or else the miracle never took place. The achievement of a viewpoint or perspective, we are coming to recognize, cannot be left to chance. In the meantime, religion, and to some extent philosophy, was lost among the varied academic courses of the curriculum; and with their loss of stature usually went the hope of achieving some evaluative sense of the whole of life and human knowledge.

The necessary integrative work in which both religion and philosophy recover their legitimate function cannot be left to good luck. Broad and intensive planning must be done for that type of course which, in cutting across fields of study, raises in their broader context age-old problems of the values by which men do and ought to live. As the impact of scientific discoveries upon social patterns, the relation of the arts to religion, the dignity of the human personality to economics, etc., are seen, we may begin to capture a sense of the intelligibility of the whole. However, to do so, we must meet the issue of those values by which we assess history as being unified and purposeful. "General education," therefore, cannot rightfully be so called unless the ultimate questions of human nature, man's moral responsibility, and spiritual destiny are raised.

From the standpoint of religion and ethics, three advantages conceivably accrue to this approach. First, the students themselves may come to feel exhilaration in the quest for a more comprehensive outlook which makes sense of human experience. As significant trends in human history swing into view, they may be helped to see that more is implied than the blind operation of massive economic and social movements. They may achieve a degree of intellectual balance which will prevent their toppling over into a fragmentary view of life. Second, sooner or later, with their instructors, they may be brought to evaluate this history, since mere chronology is not itself worthy to be called history. The "whys" of human existence persistently emerge, the answers to which demand consideration of spiritual and ethical values. At this point if the Christian philosophy and religion have anything to say, they must make their contributions. Thus, in the third place, religion

and ethics will be seen as they ought to be, intimately associated with all spheres of human endeavor. The ignoring or isolation of religion in human life, sure evidences of secularism, may by this means be partially overcome. Faith and morals may be recognized, not as irrelevant idiosyncracies, but as the stuff of history, which here and now demands a religio-ethical decision about one's own part in this course of events.

We certainly cannot be oversanguine about the results of courses of the type scantily sketched above. Instructors are not easily come by who have the needed breadth of training and interest. The pressures to get along with professional achievements will tend to make students by-pass them, unless they are made compulsory. But too much is at stake in American education and life to overlook their possibilities, for many students are seeking not only an expediently quick answer to a particular problem, but also a point of view from which they may find their own answers.

Secularism's blighting influence must be attacked at its most vulnerable points; that is, in long-range terms, that it does not make sense of past or present, that it does not take a sufficiently profound view of man's nature, and that at last it bears the bitter fruits of personal and social disintegration. The assault must come by way of reason and knowledge. The modern attempt to combat contemporary disillusionment and moral relativism solely by recourse to "faith"—sometimes without rational consideration of the object in which this faith should come to rest—is the counsel of despair. The area of reason and fact is surrendered to secularism by withdrawing in the direction of personal subjectivism, thereby allowing the false impression to get abroad that there are no evidences, moral or metaphysical, of God's activity in history which can be brought to the attention of the secular mind. Unfortunately or not, in the colleges we are first faced with a problem of strategy, rather than of theological content. The terms for the acceptance of the Christian religion have not been set by a Christian culture, but by a secularism which supposes itself capable of appreciating "evidences" and "facts," and regards faith as subjectivism. Therefore, I suspect it will do little good to wring our hands over the student's failure to comprehend the Protestant conception of faith. He will ordinarily understand the justification of religion only in terms of those methods commonly employed in the sciences, to which he is taught to look for solid verification of propositions. Of course, faith

is presupposed in these fields, as we have suggested above, but this basic polarity between reason and faith must be intelligently explored and interpreted. Often the student must come the long way around to recognize the function of faith in knowledge, because his thought processes have been subtly shaped by secularistic rather than Christian rationalism. "You must not begin by thinking that we are uninterested in religion," a student remarked. "We just don't know what or how to think about it." Here is the confession of a secularized mind which must be met on its own grounds.

The college's contribution to Christian religion is that of introducing the student to the intellectual and spiritual superficiality of secularism—attacking it on its own battlefield of "fact" and reason, where alone it will finally understand itself defeated by the superior truth of Christianity. Thus the way may be cleared for the fuller appreciation and participation in Christian faith on its higher levels.

The Skirt of Fig Leaves

FREDRIC POTTER WOODS

A Study of Henri-Frédéric Amiel.

HENRI-FRÉDÉRIC AMIEL never plucked the forbidden fruit, but he made a skirt of fig leaves and cried, "I was afraid!" He cut himself off from life and, in his painstaking *Journal intime* of 16,900 pages, attempted to create a picture of his inner life, but was never able to feel at home with the picture he drew. At the end he died believing himself to have been a failure, yet he gained immortality by probing his inner nature and talking to himself of what he found there. He is perhaps the best example of introspection to be found among the writers of diaries, and his subjectivity may well be contrasted with the objectivity of Cellini. Rousseau, in his *Confessions*, stands midway between the two.

He was brought to the attention of English readers in 1885 by the publication of Amiel's *Journal*, translated by Mrs. Humphrey Ward, and by the favorable criticism of Matthew Arnold. Additional portions of the *Journal intime* were made available in 1930, in *Philine*, translated by Van Wyck Brooks, and in 1935, in *The Private Journal of Henri Frédéric Amiel*, translated by Van Wyck Brooks and Charles Van Wyck Brooks. The last of these, with an introduction by Bernard Bouvier, is the most satisfactory selection to be published in English thus far.

Amiel was born in Geneva, September 27, 1821, and died there, May 11, 1881. His ancestors were Huguenots who sought refuge in Switzerland after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. We know little of Amiel's parents, who died when he was twelve years of age, or of his aunt and uncle in whose home he was reared apart from his two sisters. About all we know of his boyhood was that he was sensitive, impressionable, rather delicate, disposed to melancholy, and had a deep interest in religious problems. In school and college he was studious but not brilliant; he had no interest in games or sports. He had few intimacies and these were with older men.

At the age of twenty he went to Italy for a year. The next four years were spent in Germany where he studied philosophy, philology, mythology, and history. These were the happiest years of his life. After this he traveled about the university cities of Central Europe for two years, spending most of his time in Heidelberg, Munich, and Vienna.

In 1849, at the age of twenty-eight, he returned to Geneva and secured the appointment as professor of aesthetics and French literature at the Academy of Geneva, a post which he held for four years, exchanging it for the professorship of moral philosophy in 1854. However, the appointment was made by the Democratic party which had just then come into control of the government. The Aristocratic party, in power since the Restoration in 1814, would have nothing to do with intellectual upstarts who were considered the puppets of the radical Democratic party. Amiel was by conviction a conservative, and thus for some time was cut off from the group in Geneva with whom he longed to associate. This ostracism ended after a few years, but it led to some of the early discouragement to be found in the *Journal*.

THE MAN AS OTHERS SAW HIM

The legend which has grown up around Amiel through readers of the *Journal intime*, especially the translation by Mrs. Humphrey Ward, has been that he was the typical example of a man with a sick will. But for those who knew him there was no inkling of this sort of man. In his *Journal* he seems semipowerless to act. That was not true in his social life. His activity was normal, similar to that of those around him.

Amiel lived a patient and laborious life as a teacher, he was director of the Conservatoire of Geneva for many years, he traveled, and he even wrote a few volumes of poetry. He gave much time to his friends, especially to his women friends. Children loved him. This man, so critical of himself, had a way of making others feel at ease in his presence. While most of his own efforts in literature failed, he rejoiced in the success of others. His were usually the first congratulations to reach any writer in Geneva who did a good piece of work.

Edmond Scherer, a close friend of Amiel, speaking of him as he knew him in youth, said:

In serious discussion he was a master of the unexpected, and his energy, his *entrain*, affected us all. If his grammatical questions, his discussions of rhymes and synonyms, astonished us at times, how often, on the other hand, did he not give us cause to admire the variety of his knowledge, the precision of his ideas, the charm of his quick intelligence! We found him always, besides, kindly and amiable, a nature one might trust and lean upon with perfect security. He awakened in us but one regret; *we could not understand how it was a man so richly gifted produced nothing, or only trivialities.*¹

¹ Ward, Mrs. Humphrey, *Amiel's Journal*, Introduction, pp. xxvi, xxvii. (All references in this paper are from the above, published by A. L. Burt, Publishers, undated, second edition. This translation was originally published by Macmillan and Co., London and New York, 1885 and 1888.)

He wrote the thousands of pages of his Journal which represent at least forty-eight volumes. Without the Journal, all those who knew him would have considered him an active man, somewhat reserved, and becoming more so as the years passed, but they saw nothing of the tragic depths of his life. He had admitted in his Journal that he never confessed his grief except to the Journal. The Journal itself came as a surprise to his family. He never alluded to it, although he often brought out his other writings to read in the family circle.

THE REASON FOR THE JOURNAL

The Journal was found after his death in a box bearing this message: "I give no one authority to destroy a single page of this Journal." Amiel did not begin the *Journal intime* with publication in mind, but as he grew older he saw that parts of it might have some value for others. Seven years before his death he instructed his friends to publish such parts of it as might seem to them to possess any general interest.

At times he was skeptical of its value, yet persisted in adding to it. In 1875 he wrote:

Are all the documents I have produced, taken together, my correspondence, these thousands of journal pages, my lectures, my articles, my poems, my notes of different kinds, anything better than withered leaves? To whom and to what have I been useful? Will my name survive me a single day, and will it ever mean anything to anybody? A life of no account! A great many comings and goings, a great many scrawls—for nothing. When all is added up—nothing!²

A year later he wrote:

A private journal is a friend to idleness. It frees us from the necessity of looking all round a subject, it puts up with every kind of repetition, it accompanies all the caprices and meanderings of the inner life, and proposes to itself no definite end. This journal of mine represents the materials of a good many volumes: what prodigious waste of time, of thought, of strength! It will be useful to nobody, and even for myself—it has rather helped me to shrink life than to practice it. A journal takes the place of a confidant, that is, of friend or wife; it becomes a substitute for production, a substitute for country and public. It is a grief-cheating device, a mode of escape and withdrawal; but factotum as it is, though it takes the place of everything, properly speaking it represents nothing at all.³

In spite of this Amiel wrote 16,900 pages of the Journal! From beginning to end the reader sees a clear purpose running through the work—the desire above all else to see the truth about himself. He attempted to express himself wholly, to lay bare his life to himself.

² Page 286; August 28, 1875.

³ Page 295; July 26, 1876.

The Journal, which had been started as a study of his inner life that he might work out needed corrections, became a whirlpool into which was drawn his ambition to create. The "habit of the Journal" grew into the great necessity of his life. Time spent with it was a time of self-communion. These pages became his sanctuary from society. All people must have someone or something in which to confide, which is the reason behind most diaries. Amiel had to have a father-confessor, and the Journal filled that need.

THE INNER STRUGGLE

What others thought of Amiel and what he thought of himself were very different matters. He early developed a bent for self-analysis, and his reading of Hegel added fuel to the flame. The *Journal intime* reflects the long struggles of a man obsessed by the absolutes and perfections of his Calvinistic teachings, whose inner experience could not be correlated with the everyday world around him.

Amiel was inhibited by the idea that he could not act. At the same time he believed he was called to great things, though he was never able to specify just what they were. This conviction that a high destiny was necessary for him was probably the result of his Calvinistic sense of duty and his pride. Many of his friends thought he should use his talents in writing, and Amiel believed that as a professor he was "morally bound to justify his position by publication." In 1866 he wrote:

My old friends are, I am afraid, disappointed in me; they think that I do nothing, that I have deceived their expectations and their hopes. I, too, am disappointed. All that would restore my self-respect and give me a right to be proud of myself, seems to me unattainable and impossible, and I fall back upon trivialities, gay talk, distractions. I am always equally lacking in hope, in faith, in resolution. . . . I have been passing the evening with Charles Heim, who in his sincerity, has never paid me any literary compliment. As I love and respect him, he is forgiven. Self-love has nothing to do with it—and yet it would be sweet to be praised by so upright a friend! It is depressing to feel one's self silently disapproved of; I will try to satisfy him, and to think of a book which may please both him and Scherer.⁴

He did not realize that life consists of thinking and acting, and acting and thinking; we shuttle back and forth between the two. Amiel could only do the one. When he acted it was "veiled," his heart was not in it. This is a world of action with currents of ideas going around us. He lived in a world of ideas, but not in a world of people.

⁴ Page 155; September 20, 1866.

Amiel thought that he should write; but when he took a step toward production, or toward action and the realization of himself, a vague sense of peril overtook him. He thought his inner life was endangered. In the process of his unmerciful criticism of himself he could never gain the courage to accept himself in action such as writing, marriage, or any other important decision. While he wrote much, except for the *Journal intime*, it was never wholehearted; and while he debated the question of marriage, he could never take the full step. Considering himself to be an exceptional man and wishing to be great, he suffered because he never did anything great. Probably had he acted he would not have been more than the mediocre poet or philosopher that we see in what he did write. Amiel realized this, and thus refused to attempt any of them seriously. Instead he saved his energy for an enterprise almost unique in the world and through which he was to win a most enviable immortality. He lived for his Journal; everything was subordinated to this great task.

Amiel's life was a constant negation. Thinking in terms of perfection, and realizing perfection could not be reached, he refused to compromise. If he could not win the game according to his rules, he would not play at all. He saw his weakness and made a virtue of it, calling it idealism!

He coddled his sensibilities for fear of making a mistake. Turning away from the things he wanted most, Amiel denied life because he was afraid life would treat him roughly. He excused himself by saying he was protecting his idealism. In reality he did not know how to go about doing what he wanted to do. This may be seen in his relation to women. He lauded the fact that he "protected" his virginity (until the age of thirty-nine), and called a virgin manhood the ideal state. He did not know how to do otherwise, but he desired to attempt it. Finally "Philine," the woman he came nearest loving, pushed sexual intercourse upon him. He wanted marriage, was always afraid to attempt it, and never did. He rationalized it all by looking for the ideal woman who he knew did not exist.

The selections from the *Journal intime* published under the title *Philine* and translated by Van Wyck Brooks reveal the relations of Amiel and "Philine." This accomplished and attractive woman gave herself without reserve to Amiel. She appreciated his ability and was extravagant in her praise. She worshiped at his feet. All these things

Amiel treasured in his Journal, but he vacillated pro and con for years until the affair ran its course and died under the weight of its own indecision. Amiel recognized the good qualities of Philine and her worth to him in his loneliness. There were times when he resolved to marry. Then he would waver. He would not impose his wishes upon another's personality. He did not care for constant intimacy. His settled routine of living would be upset if he married. He feared the reactions of friends and relatives.

Seeking a way out, he became suspicious of Philine and began to question her acts. He reasoned that she would be incapable of meeting his needs. He thought of the unhappiness of many families he knew. Philine could arouse his emotions but they never became one in spirit. There was always some reserve on the part of Amiel. He would never give himself, and such a man is incapable of love. He liked her worship, but would not open his life to stand on a basis of equality with her. After all, if Philine had known him too well it would probably have dampened her hero worship. Thus he brought the matter to a close with the thought that one should not marry unless marriage is irresistible.

Another aspect of the inner struggle may be seen in Amiel's thought on religion with which the Journal abounds. He had a deep sense of responsibility and of his own personal need. The great question of humanity is, "What is it which saves?"⁵ He often attempted an answer, but it was in terms of intellect rather than an experience of the heart.

Moral love is the redeeming force in man, he said, but to be known it must be lived. "Every life is a profession of faith."⁶ We must accept ourselves in our environment, resign ourselves to it, for God is good and what he does is well done. In spite of this he reasons that detachment from the world is to be strong. God is the source of strength, courage, and security.

To "be saved," he wrote, is the same as being happy, possessing eternal life, living "in God." The aim of life is to "become divine," a "work of God," thus the end of life is to achieve perfection. Every life is made up of the evil self and the divine self; and salvation is the process of giving more and more place in one's life to the good, the acceptance of the task of living with one's evil self and making it into

⁵ Page 14; April 7, 1851.

⁶ Page 31; May 2, 1852.

good. To make the start is "conversion," and this must be repeated again and again. To do right is to conquer the self, and free it for heavenly things; voluntary submission is the way of strength. "Duty thus becomes our principle of action, our source of energy, the guarantee of our partial independence of the world, the condition of our dignity, the sign of our nobility."⁷

Although he saw the way that might have led to the abundant life, Amiel played with ideas for their own satisfying value. His whole life was self-centered, and thus he was no more able to gain an assuring relationship with God than he had been with Philine. The self is social in nature, an achievement of appropriating the selves of others and organizing them into what George Herbert Mead called the "generalized other." To be one's self, then is to be one's self in relation to society.

The assurance of salvation is experienced as the self gives a place of centrality to the reality of God. It is faith that enables the self to open the way to God—for God is a tremendous force in any man's life and will bring about an upheaval in his picture of himself. Faith beats back a man's fears, overrides his egoism or gives strength in place of timidity, until God becomes central in his experience. Once this step has been taken, he realizes that faith is the victory! The self does not suffer in this new relation, but opening the way for God to come in, receives new power, visualizes wider horizons, begins to realize its true possibilities. The old is made new. This assurance becomes more real as it is carried into the continued integration of the self and society and as the person grows in experience of fellowship with God. Amiel lacked the faith to open his life to God.

At the end, when ill health came upon him, stoicism became Amiel's attitude: the fruits of salvation were untasted. Although he thought much on the question of salvation, it always remained a matter of thought, and was never worked out in relations with God and his fellows. No man is saved by himself alone; he is saved in and through relations.

THE PROBLEM

Three selections from the *Journal*, written during his thirties, show Amiel's analysis of his problem:

What might be, spoils for me what is. What ought to be consumes me with sadness. So the reality, the present, the irreparable, the necessary, repel and even terrify me. I have too much imagination, conscience and penetration, and not

⁷ Page 153; April 14, 1866.

enough character. The life of thought alone seems to me to have enough elasticity and immensity, to be free enough from the irreparable; practical life makes me afraid.⁸

I cannot bring myself to move freely, to show myself without a veil, to act on my own account and act seriously, to believe in and assert myself, whereas a piece of badinage which diverts attention from myself to the thing in hand, from the feeling to the skill of the writer, puts me at my ease. It is timidity which is at the bottom of it. There is another reason, too—I am afraid of greatness, I am not afraid of ingenuity, and distrustful as I am both of my gift and my instrument, I like to reassure myself by an elaborate practice of execution. All my published literary essays, therefore, are little else than studies, games, exercises for the purpose of testing myself. I play scales, as it were; I run up and down my instrument, I train my hand and make sure of its capacity and skill. But the work itself remains unachieved. My effort expires, and satisfied with the *power* to act I never arrive at the will to act. I am always preparing and never accomplishing, and my energy is swallowed up in a kind of barren curiosity. Timidity, then, and curiosity—these are the two obstacles which bar against me a literary career.⁹

I am always waiting for the woman and the work which shall be capable of taking entire possession of my soul, and of becoming my end and aim. . . . I have not given away my heart: hence this restlessness of spirit. I will not let it be taken captive by that which cannot fill and satisfy it; hence this instinct of pitiless detachment from all that charms me without permanently binding me; so that it seems as if my love of movement, which looks so like inconstancy, was at bottom only a perpetual search, a hope, a desire, and a care, the malady of the ideal.¹⁰

From these and other selections it may be seen that Amiel did grasp part of his problem, but he met it with a martyr spirit. He told himself he would not accept the "common destiny." He could see himself contemplatively but not in practice. Imaginative experience is real experience, but it is not overt experience. His greatest fear was that of making a mistake. He should have laughed, realized that he looked silly, but he had no sense of humor. He would have found that a wholesome sense of humor may do what prayer often cannot. However, it takes a well-developed person to enjoy a joke on himself.

Amiel believed he did not have enough character. Character is not what we do; it is the by-product of what we do wholeheartedly. It is the by-product of our loyalties, and of what we like to do when we don't have to do anything. While we may not be able to get at the end result, we may approach it through these other things. Instead, Amiel ran away. When he was fifty-nine, he wrote:

⁸ Page 11; April 6, 1851.

⁹ Pages 51, 52; July 26, 1853.

¹⁰ Page 71; July 21, 1856.

Inadaptability, due either to mysticism or stiffness, delicacy or disdain, is the misfortune or at all events the characteristic of my life. I have not been able to fit myself to anything, to content myself with anything. I have never had the quantum of illusion necessary for risking the irreparable. I have made use of the ideal itself to keep me from any kind of bondage. It was thus with marriage: only perfection would have satisfied me; and, on the other hand, I was not worthy of perfection.

. . . . So that, finding no satisfaction in things, I tried to extirpate desire, by which things enslave us. Independence has been my refuge; detachment my stronghold. I have lived the impersonal life—in the world, yet not in it, thinking much, desiring nothing. It is a state of mind which corresponds with what in women is called a broken heart; and it is in fact like it, since the characteristic common to both is despair. When one knows that one will never possess what one could have loved, and that one can be content with nothing less, one has, so to speak, left the world, one has cut the golden hair, parted with all that makes human life—that is to say, illusion—the incessant effort toward an apparently attainable end.¹¹

Whatever we lack the most is the thing we advertise the most. Amiel lived in society and appeared to be an active participant, but that was not his real life. It was a sham existence. He lived with thoughts, not with people. In the long run the greatest asset of man is *people*.

His trouble was fear, a disease of which many people die, and with which a far greater number live a living death. Amiel could never be himself, for he ran from the thing he wanted.

Fighting to dispossess
Self of its wavered decision,
Fig leaves proving no check
To his naked illusion,
Down the dark swamp he ran,
Ran and dared not look back,
Dripping, plunging, he spun
In his fear's morass.¹²

¹¹ Pages 342, 343; May 19, 1880.

¹² Unpublished poem by the writer, written after reading Amiel's Journal.

Is Europe Preparing for a Holy War?*

ANDRÉ TROCME

Christian civilization evaluated by a French apostle of international friendship—it can be effectively defended only if its principles are sacrificially incarnated.

THIS TITLE is not my own. The question is raised in the American popular magazine, *Time*,¹ by Dr. Paul Hutchinson. Dr. Hutchinson is editor-in-chief of the most widely read Protestant weekly review in the United States, *The Christian Century*. Recently he took a trip around the world, in the American manner. His brief stay in Europe showed him the existence of new Christian parties, recently formed to meet the tidal wave of communism: the M.R.P. in France, the democratic Christian party in Italy, the Christian democratic union in Germany, the small landowners' party in Hungary, the popular Christian party in Norway, the Christian parties in Belgium, in Holland, and in Slovakia.

All these groups have this much in common: they are born of a reaction of Christian conscience against fascism; they reunite Catholics and Protestants under the same standard; they are anti-Marxist. Did not the Pope formulate, a few days before the French and Italian elections of the spring of 1946, an undisguised appeal for a political awakening of the Christian forces of Europe?

It is necessary to choose whether to become champions or destroyers of Christian civilization. . . . The question is whether European institutions will continue to rest on the firm rock of Christianity, on the faith in a personal God, on belief in the spiritual dignity and eternal destiny of man . . . or whether the nations of Europe will confide their future to the unfeeling omnipotence of a materialist state without any ideal beyond the visible world, without religion and without God.

Although the "Christian parties" have not yet received the official patronage of the ecclesiastical authorities, Dr. Hutchinson adds, and although no official declaration of war against communism has been made by the churches, Christian forces are already taking up their battle stations.

*Translated by permission from *Christianisme Social, Revue Sociale et Internationale pour un Monde Chrétien*, ed. J. Martin, March, 1947, Versailles, France.

¹ Oct. 21, 1946.

The alarming clairvoyance of that article was to me, I admit, a shock and a revelation. I had not yet realized the mortal danger we are running: if a war should break out tomorrow between the Anglo-Saxon powers and the U.S.S.R., it would have, still more than the last conflict, the character of a religious war. On one side the Western powers would defend stubbornly their democratic ideologies and the economic empire which they exercise over the world; on the other side, Russia would defend her communist ideology while trying to destroy Anglo-Saxon imperialism.

Has the Christian church a proper task in this conflict? Ought we to prepare our children to set out on a new crusade? Do we live in an epoch comparable to those when Christendom had to retreat under the pressure of Islam in North Africa in the eighth century and on Constantinople in the fifteenth? Should Christian civilization defend itself by force of arms as at the Battle of Poitiers, or should the church rather detach itself from the struggles of the nations, to concentrate on a task of spiritual conquest? That is the problem we wish briefly to examine here.

Our study will be divided into three parts. First we shall try to define, in our view as Christians, what civilization is. Second, we shall seek to determine the methods by which a civilization can be defended. Third, we shall make a distinction between the responsibilities of governments for defense of Christian civilization, and those of Christians themselves.

The author of this article is not a specialist in sociological, economic, or philosophical questions. He makes no pretension to analyze adequately in a few pages the immense problem that preoccupies us. His ambition is rather to provoke an exchange of constructive opinions.

I. THREE DEFINITIONS OF CIVILIZATION

Without being experts, we can give three definitions of civilization which do not entirely overlap. First, civilization is an economic phenomenon; second, it is an aesthetic phenomenon; third, it is an ethical phenomenon.

1. *Civilization is an economic phenomenon.* A civilization, according to the materialist philosophers, is the result of a certain accumulation of labor and of capital (capital based on slaves, on soldiers, on serfs, on gold, and in the contemporary era, capital based on transportation and machines). It is necessary that this accumulation be sufficient, if an

empire is to rise, and within the empire a metropolis with its monuments, its religion, its luxury, which make possible the flowering of art and literature. Babylon, Thebes, Athens, Rome, Peking, Paris, London, have been the undeniable products of economic types of civilization. Certain of these capitals are now in ruins, others in decline, others in formation, such as New York and Moscow.

If we adopt this materialist definition of civilization, we recognize that the phenomena with which we are most concerned, the spiritual phenomena such as religion, art, and literature, are only superstructures expressing in faith, music, and language the precise state of the society that produced them. The defense of civilization would then consist essentially in conserving its material wealth which conditions all these other manifestations. To conserve the prosperity of an empire, there is need of colonies, a fleet, armies, which will carry afar the industrial products and the culture of the metropolis, and which will bring back to it the raw materials from foreign lands.

2. *Civilization is an aesthetic phenomenon.* It is a product of the soil. The countryside, the climate, the subsoil, the geographical situation, and the history of a given region, have engendered a certain tradition, a language, and a philosophy of life. The religion (whether Christian or not), the literature, the thought and art, take on the savor and the color of the land which bears them. Spain made of Christianity a passionate, sensuous, and fanatical religion; Scotland produced a predominantly intellectual and Puritan Christianity; the northern peoples are naturally Protestant and the southern naturally Catholic. There is no "great" or "small" civilization. A Swiss canton which has not made itself talked about in the history of nations can be more exquisitely civilized than the suburbs of London or of New York. The founders of empires, who have played leading roles on the world scene, have not modified the style of life of any province or the character of its people. Once the foreign inundation was past, the land found itself intact. If the conquest of the ancient world by Rome, that of North Africa by Islam, and that of the Americas by Europe, are cited in refutation, we reply that today at any rate the world is fully occupied. In order to change civilizations now, collective massacres would be necessary such as neither Hitler nor the atomic bomb will ever accomplish.

Less crudely materialistic than the first definition, more naturalistic, at the same time more fatalistic, the aesthetic definition of civilization leads us to slothfulness and all kinds of collaborationism. Athens, we can say,

never dominated the ancient world, Florence was capital only of the small unit Tuscany; Paris could lose today its economic role and would remain no less the heart of Ile-de-France and the crossroads of Western Europe. Let us not fear the tumult of armies and the building of uranium factories. Let us not exhaust ourselves in a chimerical effort to maintain an empire that is disappearing. Our culture has nothing to fear, it is eternal.

Aestheticism already threatened Christian civilization in 1939. It is reappearing today and drugging us with a dangerous languor. Although we are not far removed from the heroic years of 1942-44, when we became conscious under the Nazi domination of a reality very close to us which we had to save! The profound motive of our resistance was not the salvation of the colonial French empire, or even that of France as a first-rank nation. Neither was it the protection of our monuments and our libraries; the resistance put them in danger rather than protecting them. No, the issue concerned something excellent and invisible, which could not survive except in the measure that we renounced everything to safeguard it: civilization as such.

3. *Civilization is an ethical phenomenon.* Only this last definition, although the most abstract, takes account of the profound and mysterious sentiment of which we have just spoken, this sentiment which constrains us when we feel our civilization threatened: "Is it not needful for me to sacrifice my life that it may live?" This is not a matter of the defense of economic interests, nor even defense of political liberties, but the saving of certain moral values, which cannot endure either subservience to other conceptions of truth and justice, or collaboration with them. The resisters, in offering their lives for a principle of justice—equality of all men, Jews included, before God and before the law—have defined once for all, clearly, the true nature of civilization. It is an incarnation of truth and justice, which gives a meaning to our earthly life and is renewed only in the degree to which we are ready to sacrifice all for it.

II. THE FIGHT FOR CIVILIZATION

Two practical conclusions have emerged from the preceding study. First, civilization is something for which one must fight. No civilization is the product of fatally determined evolution of a geographical or ethnographical nature. Secondly, since civilization is not a material phenomenon, we should seek the secret of its birth and its renewal in the

appearance on earth of certain principles of truth and justice, which are subsequently translated into institutions and forms of thought.

When we have truly grasped the process of the birth of a civilization, we shall know better how to work for the survival and the renaissance of our own, by a free determination of our wills.

The origin of a civilization, defined according to the moral values which it incarnates, is not the victorious campaign of a conqueror, the accumulation of a certain quantity of bricks or stones by a building monarch, the prosperity of a certain economic system or a certain seaport. It is the invention or discovery, by some genius of faith, of a new manner of living, which has galvanized the consciences and hearts of a generation of men and of their descendants. Only later, and often centuries later, as was the case with Christianity, the new forms have brought into being the framework of a solid society and occasionally even of a prosperous empire.

It is not difficult to recount the names of the founders of civilizations. There were the Jewish prophets who, in spite of the short-sighted nationalists of their time, discovered and expressed the universal mission of the chosen people.

There was Jesus, who broke the narrow framework in which the Israelite monotheism remained imprisoned, to offer to the whole world eternal life, through the sacrifice of his divine Self.

There were the early Christians, whose pure and loving customs founded a new moral world. They were delivered to the beasts, for having refused to return to paganism by sacrificing to Caesar.

There were the first monks who, renouncing the ease of life in the Gallo-Roman cities, cleared and tilled the lost valleys of our mountains and, poor as they were, saved from the avalanche of barbarism the intellectual riches of antiquity.

There were the martyrs of the Reformation, champions of liberty of conscience, whose faith and sacrifice forcibly blazed the trail for democratic religious toleration.

There were the Puritans and the Quakers, who went out to plant in the wilds of the American continent the societies of justice and of non-violence of which they had dreamed.

There were the first Christian missionaries, leaving Europe for love of the pagan peoples, without arms and without money. Alone, in the face of conquerors and traders, they were the true authors of the spiritual awakening of Africa and the Orient.

But let us remember that there has not been Christian civilization only. The power of a truth, after it is incarnated in human lives, is immeasurable. We say *a* truth, for there are many truths, more or less partial, rivals or complementary, all of which have brought forth civilizations.

Socrates, drinking the hemlock rather than renounce the teaching of the rules of right thinking, planted the foundations of the modern sciences and their cult of objective truth.

The unknown Roman lawmakers, enamored of justice like their successors the Gracchi, had lived the law before handing it down to us, petrified in the pages of a code.

Mohammed, lifting up again the standard of strict monotheism abandoned by the Christians, perhaps saved the medieval world from a return to polytheism.

And more recently, it was in exile rather than in triumph that Lenin and his handful of Marxists prepared for the Christian world the deliverance from an exploitative individualism in which it is now still enmeshed.

At the other end of the Asiatic continent, Gandhi and his fervent disciples of nonviolence have demonstrated, in the midst of the industrial century, the powerful efficacy of divine love as a social ferment of justice and of liberty.

Even the brief, lightning-like adventure of Hitler, with all its unrealistic, false romanticism, had only to run its course to show us that even lies, when they are believed and incarnated by men possessed but sincere, can build ephemeral civilizations.

Yes, the history of nazism is there, proof of our liberty, demonstration of the choice which we can exercise between the kinds of spirit to which we are to consecrate ourselves and by which we wish tomorrow to be formed.

The secret of all civilization is the marriage between a spiritual truth and our human flesh. God himself has revealed himself to us as Holy Spirit incarnate and human flesh spiritualized by a double sacrifice. We have the choice of spirits which we are to incarnate. The law of sacrifice and its amazing fecundity remains always the same: the sowing of the martyrs brings forth civilizations.

III. DEFENSE OF CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION

We really ought not to speak of the defense of Christian civilization.

If there is no longer anyone ready to incarnate its truths, it will perish of itself, even if its atomic energy plants were buried under mountains of concrete.

The tragedy of modern Christian civilization is that it is striving to perpetuate itself in no longer living according to the four principles on which it was founded: the expectation of a righteous Kingdom, inherited from the Jews; Platonic reason, which comes to us from the Greeks; law, the Roman heritage; and the love of God cemented by the blood of Jesus Christ. There are the four cornerstones of our civilization. Now, it has abandoned messianism, which today has taken refuge in Russia; it has lost the taste for the pursuits of reason, confined today to museums and libraries; it abandons itself to insensate technical and military fantasies, for the sake of an oppressive colonialism attended by its hideous caricature—murderous racism, the myth of the inequality of races; and it has confined the generous torrent of divine charity in the narrow channels of professional philanthropy.

With or without the threatening rivalry of Islam, Hinduism, or Communism, Christian civilization rolls inevitably toward the abyss—because partial and primitive truths, if they are sincerely believed and incarnated in lives, will always bring forth stronger organisms, healthier civilizations, than can the immense body of modern Christendom, delivered up to contradiction. Contradiction is an interior decomposition far more dangerous for a civilization than moral licentiousness. That is what destroyed the Jewish civilization of Jesus' day. The Pharisees were the most austere personalities of their time. Nevertheless their system had to collapse because it rested upon inner duplicity and contradiction. Only a clearly thought-out return to the four fundamental principles of Christian civilization can arrest the ineluctable process that we see unfolding before our eyes.

But finally we ask, ought we to try to save at any price this decadent Christian civilization? To that question we shall reply with both a negation and an affirmation.

If we are speaking of the *Christian religion*, no. We do not have to try to save it. Christianity, or rather, the Christian truth does not have to be saved. Even if Christianity ceased to be professed by the majority of Europeans, it would inevitably be reborn elsewhere: in America, in Asia, or in Africa. Truth is God. We need not disturb ourselves about his future. God takes care of himself. He directs and dominates history, he does not need man to assure his triumph. It

is he, on the contrary, who takes pity on us, and on our Western civilization, unfaithful to Christianity and failing.

But if we are speaking of Christian *civilization*: that is, of the human institutions and visible organisms of our society, intended for the transmission to our children of a revealed doctrine and of a sacred tradition, which there is danger of their tragically ignoring in case a social decomposition should supervene. . . .

If it is a question of the sanctuaries where the gospel can still be freely taught, and of communities of work or of learning where people still try to put in practice the teaching of Christ. . . .

Indeed, under the threat of seeing our children innocently despise and grossly ridicule eternal truth, as did the young Nazis, yes, we must seek to save Christian civilization.

The grace received from God is a reason for and a possibility of action. It is not a matter of holding onto Christian civilization as if it were a half-wrecked ship in which we have stored our wealth, but of valiantly rethinking it each morning as a reality which carries us and dominates us, full of sap and vigor, pregnant with the future. We believe in the prodigious and inexhaustible fecundity of divine truth, as soon as we accept the task of incarnating it anew in our time. To defend a civilization is to incarnate its principles, and not to use force and cunning, money and technology, to prolong artificially its survival. There will be democracy again when there are democrats ready to live and die for democratic liberties. There will be equality and fraternity when a certain number of free men will establish, at the risk of their lives, a mode of life really brotherly and equal.

Here are the methods that we propose:

1. To remind the church and the masses of so-called Christians, that the four cornerstones of Christian civilization are: attention to Justice, reasonable Thought, Law, Charity. This reminder is the one authentic and modern form of evangelism and reconstruction.

2. To invite every man to conform his life to the four truths above mentioned. Far more, to undertake to incarnate them and to make this the principal motive of his human career and to sacrifice if necessary his comfort, his happiness, and his security.

3. Only a return to the foundation of Christian civilization can arrest the process of decomposition of which we have spoken: a body without soul which is putrefying. We may multiply sermons in vain, if we suggest that forgiveness dispenses with obedience; the putrefaction

will continue up to the moment when an elementary and naïve obedience to God will give back a soul to this great, decomposed corpse. Will the existing church be that soul? One sometimes doubts it. Its escapes into neoritualism or abstract theological speculations manifest the desperate attempt of its members to escape the primary demand of God: the return to the Sermon on the Mount. If the church fails, new communities, communities of work, communities of prayer, communities of teaching, should be founded as unshaken citadels within which the "four principles" shall be believed and obeyed.

4. The expectation of a Kingdom of righteousness ought to make us "messianists," anti-individualist, and anticapitalist, preparing by thought, public action, and renunciation, the birth of a just society. The rules of reasonable thought command us to be antiromantic, respecting to the limit the methods of science and search for truth, and to be implacable opponents of all propaganda, that is to say, all demonstration of truth by success. The application of the rules of universal law ought to impel us to realize, with the least possible delay, the total liberation of all races and all subservient classes by their attainment of democratic liberties. Finally, charity is incompatible with suppression, on a small or a large scale, of human life. Only the refusal to kill will save Christian civilization from bloody suicide.

5. The role of states or governments in the acute crisis through which we are passing, may differ, we think, from that of individual Christians. Governments inherit a historical situation which they did not create but for which the mass of unfaithful Christians is responsible. *It is the inner contradiction of the lives of thousands of Christian citizens, their lack of messianic faith, their unreason, their pride of class and race, their inveterate egoism, that obliges governments, the expression of their will, to act barbarously.*

It is necessary to break the vicious circle of the pressure exercised by unfaithful Christians upon the state, and the pressure exercised in return by the state upon these same Christians. The initiative must come from below, from the individual Christian. It was always individual decisions that were able to break chains in the past. It was in freeing himself from internal and external compulsions by the liberating grace of God, that the Christian became the liberator of his country, fettered by the lack of civic courage of its citizens. Remember 1940! And it was in disobeying the king, whom they respected, that the Huguenots prepared a better France.

6. Thus the fearful judgment may be averted which weighs upon Christian civilization and constitutes the real threat against it: that in the great impending conflict, Christian civilization risks losing its soul because, over against the emerging elemental forces, it is determined to defend the high truths of which it is the bearer by most unjust, most arrogant, and most hypocritical methods. Is there still time to arrest this fatal trend? Even if we hardly believe so, a handful of men such as we should make the venture. Genuine faith shows itself as a gift and a power from God, when we are engaged in the service of a cause we believe lost. The true seed is never sown in vain, even if the harvest does not always have the form we looked for.

IV

Since I began the revision of this article, two new documents have come before me: first, a report on the situation in China signed by General Marshall; second, an article in *Life* entitled "The Fight for Germany,"² signed by Reinhold Niebuhr, a well-known contemporary Protestant theologian in America.

General Marshall, recognizing the existence "within the Kuomintang party of an extremely powerful group of reactionaries, who are opposed to almost all efforts that are made to encourage the formation of a genuinely coalition government," declares:

The Communists, one hundred per cent, do not hesitate to take the most rigorous measures to arrive at their ends, such as destroying the means of communication in order to ruin the economy of China, thus producing a situation which allows them to overthrow the government more easily, or which may lead simply to the dissolution of the government in question; they take these measures without the least concern for the suffering they produce among the population.

And here are the impressions of Dr. Niebuhr on the Russian tactics in Germany:

In Berlin [the Russians] carry on a continued press campaign against the Western world but ban our newspapers from their sector if they contain the slightest criticism of Soviet policy. They control the University of Berlin because it is in their sector and impose rigid political tests upon the student body, but they also control the schools of all sectors through the domination of the Berlin magistrate, established before our entrance. Thus far it has been impossible to eliminate their communist textbooks from the Western sectors. . . . On every level of policy, in short, the Russian pressure is insistent and consistent.

In seeking to gain one concession after another from us, Russia hopes to

² Oct. 21, 1946.

profit by the well-known reluctance of democracies to risk war and the equally well-known ability of dictatorships to do so or at least to appear to be running the risk. . . . The concessions which the democracies make pile up fears and resentments among even a reluctant population until the moment is reached when even democracies are forced to make a stand. Meanwhile the same concessions increase the boldness and the strength of the dictatorship until a point is reached when it thinks it can wage a successful war. . . .

The point of explosion in Europe would be reached when Russian power came within proximate domination of the continent. At that point the instincts of survival in the West would prompt decisive action and a joining of the issue. The way to avoid war is not to allow this expansion.

These two documents, like the article by Hutchinson, put their finger on the real, brutal situation in a way that our French newspapers rarely do, for fear of displeasure abroad.

It is a moment when, just as before Munich, the childlike practice of Christian virtues by governments would run the risk of encouraging the growing toughness and even the aggressive spirit of leaders who do not believe in these virtues and do not seek to practice them.

Also our thought is not to say to Western governments: "Be naïve, be dupes, yield on every point." It is necessary to say "no" when one wishes to avoid disorder making work impossible in a collective group—a family, a school, a factory, a city, a country, or a continent. To resist the double temptation of appeasement and of violence, the temptation of Munich and the temptation of Hiroshima, our governments must be able to count above all on the firm conscience and insight of Christians. The Christian church should mobilize. But not in order to send believers to battle positions assigned to them in the inner circles of political parties and the armies of great masters of the international chessboard. The Christian church ought to direct her own mobilization and assign to genuine believers in its own inner circle (not to refugees from fascism and reaction who are seeking shelter under her wings), the spiritual battle positions determined by Holy Scripture. It is in remaining faithful to herself, or rather to Jesus Christ, her Lord, that she will fulfill her role as guardian of civilization.

The weapons of God against kings and tribunals have not changed since Jesus gave them to his disciples. Inefficacious and ridiculous in the eyes of the world, they are in the eyes of God the only ones capable of accomplishing his will, in the terrestrial and human plan which he has conceived for each of us and for our civilization. We have to abandon all fear, since he directs history. We do not have to calculate or demonstrate that the technical power of weapons of the Spirit is equal to

that of the atomic bomb. We have to take them, as God has prepared them, without trying to supplement them with a helmet of our own invention, or to reinforce them with an armament evolved from our own monstrous imagination. And the weapons of the spirit are offensive as well as defensive, let us not forget. Our offensive begins with our mobilization: *to know the truth* (on China, Germany, Poland, Rumania, and Russia, but also on Indonesia, India, Indo-China, Algeria, the Near East, and Madagascar), in a spirit of rigorous, conscientious objectivity. *To tell the truth*, even if it wounds some people's amour-propre, jostles certain interests, and provokes reactions. But *to tell it always with love* toward those responsible. *To make ourselves one in solidarity*, from now on, *with all those who are victims of some injustice, whoever they are, wherever they are.*

To accept a sacrifice of time, money, popularity, career, family tranquillity, and to prepare ourselves openly for a new resistance, non-violent, more serious and more loving than the last; a resistance begun today, when everything tends to a slackening of energy after the difficult years of the war.

This is the Christian struggle for civilization. If a Christian is at his post of combat, he will render within the Western nations those services which God requires of him, and our precious and noble Christian civilization will live. If he abandons his post as a Christian to lower himself voluntarily to the ranks of those who, not believing, are not called to the same vocation, he will lose his savor and will contribute to precipitating into the abyss that frail flower of Truth which he desired to save.

[Translated by Erminie Huntress Lantero.]

Back to Calvin

THEODORE F. SAVAGE

Advocates a return, not to traditional Calvinistic theology, but to Calvin's central emphasis—the essential truths about God and man's relation to him.

ALL MY LIFE I have been in revolt against traditionalism in theology. The creeds of the past were for the most part burdens rather than helps. Especially was I repelled by the stern and rigid orthodoxy of my New England ancestors. Even before I went to a liberal university I had felt myself emancipated from the narrow formulations of a creed that seemed legalistic, mechanical, and heartless, and that left no place for a free human spirit, nor for the spirit of a loving God. The literature that I found in the studies of my ministerial father and grandfather did not talk a language that meant anything to me. If I were to be a minister, as my inclination led me, I must find a different way. Certainly there must be some better exponent of the Christian gospel than the revered and almost legendary John Calvin of my theological inheritance.

Yet now I make a plea for a return to John Calvin. What the church most needs today is a new appreciation of the insights of that stalwart theologian, statesman, and man of God. The very evident weakness of the church as we see it needs just the corrective that his emphases can give. We have suffered as we have forgotten what he considered essential.

Let me state at once that I have not changed my opinion about many of the points of the traditional Calvinistic theology—its doctrine of election, with the corollaries of spiritual pride and intolerance; its blindness concerning the essential Christian teaching about a loving God who is the father of all; its intellectual pride in assuming that human wit could formulate a system by which the Almighty himself must be bound; its indifference to the sufferings, both here and hereafter, of those not elected for salvation; and much more. Necessary and right have been the protests against much of this system.

My present concern is not derived from any fresh study of Calvin and his theology, but rather from my observations on the state of the Protestant church in our present-day civilization. Religion, at least

in its institutional aspect, does not seem to be in good health. Lip service continues to be paid to religion in general, as a necessary directive for life, but this is not matched by any significant increase of religious observances, participation in worship, or devotion to the program of a particular parish. There is a tragic weakening of emphasis on religious training in the home, partly because parents do not think it important to train their children as they were trained, and partly because they do not know how. Religious illiteracy is appalling, as many questionnaires and our own observation indicate. People today do not know what the church stands for, what it teaches, nor what they themselves should believe. The present generation is living too largely on accumulated capital of religious conviction and belief from the past. We are using up our reserves, and will have for transmission to our descendants only a sadly diminished principal of Christian belief. Here is a most serious problem for the church.

Blame for this lack of understanding of what Christianity is, and what personal religion involves, is largely to be laid at the door of its teachers and leaders. The sheep are not being fed, whether they are hungry or not. The average sermon does very little to educate the layman as to what Christianity is, nor does it proclaim any Christian convictions as absolutely true and essential. There are good sermons, it is true, from many pulpits, but they usually deal with particular problems of life, or with special applications of religion to the home, to society, to education, to public affairs. But as to *what* should be applied there is much vagueness. What is the contribution that religion can make in these different areas? There seems to be an assumption that the listener knows, but he does not. A sentiment is not enough, nor is an attitude. People must be told what are the essential elements in this religion that should save the world. Parents must not merely be aroused to the need of teaching religion to their children. They must be given an understanding of what to teach. Most parents are appalled at the thought of such a responsibility, and at the same time, our church schools proceed on the assumption that some groundwork in the teaching of religion has been done at home. But we know that in most cases this is not true. Illiterate parents cannot teach; the blind cannot lead the blind.

We need to examine afresh the teaching function of the church. We must have more clarity of thinking about what we should teach, and devote more attention to the manner of our teaching. We must

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direct the loyalty of our people to the central truths of the Christian faith, and not to peripheral matters of organization, custom, ceremonies, and orders. Our business, and the world is asking this of us, is to preach with clarity and conviction *the essential truths about God and our relationship to him.*

There is a real hunger for this Christian message. The fastest growing religious bodies in the United States today are sects like the Jehovah's Witnesses. Why? It is because of their sure convictions, their definiteness, their absolute confidence that they understand the divine plan in detail. The fact that this knowledge seems quite warped proves to be little handicap. What is significant is that they are winning adherents everywhere because they do not raise questions, discuss attitudes or problems, but give absolutely definite answers to all questions about God and human destiny. The general public wants to be told, and with conviction.

Definite beliefs are the strength of the conservative and fundamentalist sections of all our churches. People are not necessarily so impressed by the specific convictions as by the fact that such people have convictions.

This also is one of the main reasons why from time to time outstanding intellectuals and men and women of affairs become converts to Rome. They are seeking the assurance of authority.

My contention is that all of Protestantism needs a good dose of John Calvin that it may realize the importance of holding and clarifying its underlying bases of faith.

Details about the life and work of Calvin are not important for this argument, although we are all under a greater debt than we realize to the one who has been described as "the man who next to St. Paul has done most good to mankind." Renan speaks of him as "the most Christian man of his century." He was a slightly younger contemporary of Luther. He wrote his monumental work, *The Institutes*, when he was only twenty-six years of age, and brought it to its final revision only three years later. His formulation of Christian doctrine has been largely responsible for the Protestantism, not only of Switzerland where he lived, but of Holland, Scotland, Hungary, France, and a large part of the United States. Its influence and tradition, however, are not confined to present statistics, and it is interesting to note that in his coronation oath each King of England swears "to defend the Reformed Faith." It is that Reformed Faith, stemming largely from Calvin, but shared

in by many other leaders of early Protestantism, to which we should return.

An analysis of the theology of Calvin and his associates is not the necessary approach. We today are confronted with certain conditions in Protestantism which cause us concern. As we examine them we may find that Calvin has something to say to us which we need to consider.

One of the greatest weaknesses of present-day preaching and of all modern thinking is vagueness and sentimentalism—especially concerning ideas about God and the nature of the universe. We have been living in a confused age, and the church has shared that confusion. At times we live in a world of optimism, sure that all will turn out for the best. God is in his heaven and all is right with the world, or soon will be. The democratic process will bring us all needed blessings on earth and divine leniency our salvation hereafter. The theory of evolution as a divine process has been pretty generally accepted, in spite of William Jennings Bryan. God is on our side unless we are deliberate crooks, and the progress of man onward and upward forever will work out the divine plan in some fashion. Just what that plan is, and how the individual should fit into it, is left very vague, and our leaders fall to quarreling when they try to be specific. This confusion has become all the more serious as in many quarters this general optimism about life has turned to pessimism in the face of world tragedy and human failure. But the same vagueness persists. One man's idea of God seems as valid as another's, as long as there is some recognition of a Supreme Being. Our Christian leaders have allowed their imaginations considerable freedom as they have tried to tell about God and explain his relationship to the world. Never has there been greater confusion among Christian leaders on such basic convictions, and the seeker after truth does not know where to turn for answers that will satisfy.

This vagueness will not meet man's need. He is sure that there are definite answers to his questions about the ultimate realities of life and the meaning of the universe. Man wants assurance about God—not simply that he exists as some far-off divine event, but that he made man and has a purpose for him, and that divine help is truly available for those who seek. And these truths about God must in their essentials be absolute and unchanging, and not man-made conjectures. He cannot live on postulates nor even on hopes. He knows that he can get some exact answers from science, and he must have some definiteness from religion. He turns to the church for a voice of absolute assurance.

Here is where Calvin can show us the way. *The Institutes* begin with the words, "True and substantial wisdom consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves." That knowledge for Calvin and the other leaders of the Reformation had nothing in it of vagueness or sentimentalism. Men could know about God with definiteness, whether this knowledge brought them comfort or fear. What men should think about their relationship to God was crystal clear, also. God was an absolute sovereign, mighty in majesty, transcendent in holiness. God had a plan for the universe and for every human being in it, and the divine rewards and punishment were both inevitable and just. Calvin's God was not made in man's image, nor was he a projection of human personality. God is a supreme being, definitely other than man, awful and absolute. Man's only task is to come to terms with God and his universe, to learn the unchanging divine will and submit to it. Then when the individual feels that life is falling to pieces all about him and the structures of his building are but rubble, there is a rock of ages to which he can cling, an eternal law of righteousness in the universe which can be his support, an omnipotent and all-wise God whose ultimate plans and assured victory can bring peace to his soul. It is only such a conviction about God that can meet the needs of this present stricken and fearful world, and bring peace to the distressed souls of men everywhere. We must again preach about God with the conviction and assurance of John Calvin.

A second weakness of current Protestantism is that we have no adequate conception of Sin, with a capital S. We have a great variety of 1947 models of sins, mostly prewar jobs shabbily reconditioned, but Sin, the power of evil itself, we talk little about. Our medical friends say that our glands are not functioning properly. Our psychoanalysts (may heaven forgive them) explain everything by reference to some childhood repression or youthful frustration. If he could know all we could cure all. Our educators stress the mistakes in our early training and social workers concentrate on group adjustment. But down deep in our thinking we know that these explanations are not the real ones. Sin is a terrible reality, a power that grips and holds men, a force almost demonic. Who today can seriously describe sin as merely a mistaken effort after good? Are our sins merely the growing pains of adolescence? Is the distinction between sin and righteousness to be fixed by the current majority vote of society?

Calvin did not think of Sin as a trifle, a mere error of judgment,

or unfortunate result of early environment. Sin was no minor matter, easily excusable, with responsibility for it lightly transferred to the environment. It was always a disobedience of the laws of God, a violation of eternal right, an effort of finite man to defy the infinite. Sin is universal, and as long as men depend on their own strength it is inevitable. Sin is not something that we easily outgrow; it is not something that can be removed by external adjustments, or cured by education; it is not something that can be balanced and atoned for by deeds of charity. Sin as a violation of the law of God can find an answer only through God himself, who offers man the only way of salvation and of freedom from the guilt of his sin. Man to be free from the wrath of God must find God. If modern man and society are to find any real answer to these problems of the human soul, and of a disordered world, there must be a fresh recognition of the nature of Sin itself. The serious temper of the distressed world of today, freed from its easy optimism, can understand Calvin's insistence on the reality and the power of Sin.

A third emphasis of Calvin is greatly needed today: his insistence on the importance of each individual, who must seek from God the salvation of his own soul. It is true that this saved individual must work for the whole community, to bring it under the law of God, but the salvation of that community depends alone on its members who follow the will of God. Not for him would be the current emphasis on changing social conditions first, on sufficiently improving the lot of the individual so that he may think of God. Men cannot be lifted on an incoming tide of community virtue to an individual salvation and peace. Education, group activity, social security, reform through legislation, dissemination of culture, interracial good will, interfaith activity, community service, and the United Nations, so far as Calvin could have understood them, would have seemed to him wholesome and even Christian, but only as the expression of a personal commitment to Christ and his laws first of all. They were not part of the plan of God for the redemption of the world, much less the way of saving a single soul. "We are not our own; we are God's; toward him therefore, as our only legitimate end, let every part of our lives be directed." The individual soul is to be judged, with no excuse or alibi of unfortunate environment, lack of education or opportunity, or social pressure. The individual is accountable directly to God.

Calvin, however, had a social gospel more developed than that of the other reformers. "Whatever God hath conferred on us which enables

us to help our neighbor, we are stewards of it and must one day render an account of our stewardship." He was interested in community betterment and he himself governed Geneva to the glory of God. He believed in the ability to share in the government of the city as a sort of theocracy. He emphasized popular education, to enable all to understand the word of God, and to be the better able to handle the divine gifts. There was for him no distinction between the sacred and the secular, for all was of God. Therefore he did not frown on ordinary pleasures, even on Sunday, when he himself enjoyed a game of bowls. He believed that the Christian must be a good businessman. If all life is God's, get as many of its good things as possible. This emphasis has led Tawney and others to trace modern capitalism straight back to Calvin. Certainly he believed in glorifying God in one's possessions, and thought the taking of a fair rate of interest was quite proper. Idleness is the sure sign that one is not living as God intended.

Calvin's theories about man were a strange blending of pessimism concerning the hope of salvation for the multitude, and the confidence that each should entertain that he would attain it. But it was always the individual that would be the object of divine mercy and grace, not society as a whole. Certainly for him there was nothing of the idea of the progress of man onward and upward forever, and no escape from the realities of life for the individual by throwing himself into a society which would take responsibility. God created each soul, and to God that soul is accountable.

Such emphases are needed today, in our thinking and in our preaching. The world must recognize that there is a divine law, eternal, unchangeable, universal—a law which no man can escape, and deviation from which is mortal sin. Let him study the divine plan, find his place in it, and then he can have hope here and hereafter. His soul is to stand in judgment before God.

"The Wisdom of Solomon"

F. J. YETTER

One of the most appealing of the Apocryphal books here treated—its position among the forerunners of the Christian faith.

WE ARE ALL FAMILIAR with the story told of Alexander the Great, that as a young man he sat down and wept because he had no more worlds to conquer. He would have been amazed had he been able to appreciate the real extent of his conquest. Had he by some miracle lived on through the twenty-two centuries which separate him from us, he would probably still be unable to appreciate the immense contribution he made to human life when he conquered the world for Greco-Hebrew civilization by founding the city of Alexandria.

Hebrew civilization had to mingle with Hellenism before it could flower in Christianity. The Hellenists of Palestine and Asia Minor and all the ancient world were able to read the Hebrew Scriptures because they had been translated into Greek by a group of Jewish scholars gathered together in Alexandria, a city founded by a Macedonian king called, for other reasons that are now irrelevant, "the Great."

In Alexandria a Jewish thinker named Philo, having drunk deeply at the well of Greek philosophy, gave to the Jewish world a doctrine of the eternal Logos, the eternal Word, the eternal Reason. That doctrine became a bridge over which Jews and Hellenists together passed on into the larger world of Christianity.

Another school of thinkers, antedating Philo yet related somewhat to him in thought and perhaps influencing him, whose thinking silently yet surely prepared the way for the new religion of Christianity was a school represented by the writer of a book called *The Wisdom of Solomon*. This school of thinkers, like Philo, felt the need of some intermediary between God and man. God was transcendent, separated utterly from human life, partaking rather of the nature of the infinite starry heavens; man was of the essence of dust, a shadow that disappears with the setting sun, a vapor that riseth and is not. There must be some way to bridge this cosmic gulf. There must be some intermediary bringing the thoughts of the infinite God into the life of infinitesimal man. Our author found that intermediary in the divine Wisdom.

The Wisdom of Solomon belongs to a group of Scriptures called by scholars *pseudepigrapha*, denoting that they were not written by the persons whose names appear in the titles.

This book, like the Book of Proverbs, was probably attributed by the author to Solomon by reason of the reputation which that king enjoyed for wisdom in the administration of practical affairs, just as the Psalms for similar reasons were attributed to David and the Law to Moses. The real author of the Wisdom of Solomon was a Jew whose name is unknown but who, it seems certain, lived in Alexandria about the middle of the second century B.C. The book was written in Greek, a fact attested by evidences in many passages of the influence of other books of the Septuagint.¹ Though purporting to be addressed to rulers, in reality it was addressed to all faithful Jews. Its purpose was to encourage them in the practice of their faith and to warn them against the dangers of Hellenism. In the providence of God it became not an instrument for the destruction of Hellenism but an aid in forging a strong bond between Hellenism and the writer's own Jewish faith. The creation of that bond was of first importance to Christianity. Had that bond not been effected, humanly speaking, Paul and his fellow Christians would have preached in vain. Indeed, Paul himself never would have preached the Christian gospel.

The Wisdom of Solomon, besides being classified among the *pseudepigrapha*, is classified also with the *Apocrypha*. The apocryphal books are the "hidden" books. We call them extracanonical, or deuterocanonical (to use the Catholic term), but the original Hebrew word means "stored away as precious." They were at first books not read in public worship, therefore "hidden" from the uninitiated; then they came to be thought of as false or spurious.

Besides being classified as apocryphal and pseudepigraphical the Wisdom of Solomon has a third classification, according to subject matter, among the books of the Wisdom Literature. The Wisdom Literature cuts across the boundary between canonical and extracanonical books. It includes the canonical books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes as well as the extracanonical books, the Wisdom of Solomon and the Wisdom of Ben Sirach, the latter commonly known as Ecclesiasticus.

Not all of the Wisdom Literature preaches the divine Wisdom that links God with man. Much of it moves on a very human level.

¹ C. C. Torrey, it is interesting to note, writing in 1945, argues for a Hebrew original for the first section, translated into Greek by the author of section 2.

As a matter of fact it had a most humble origin. It began with the explanation and elaboration of riddles, fables, and the like, as for instance Samson's riddle in Judges 14:14, "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." The puzzle of the two mothers with one child, solved by Solomon, as recorded in the third chapter of First Kings, is another illustration, and indicates the practical judgment possessed by Solomon which caused his name to be linked with some of the books of the Wisdom Literature.

In Jeremiah 18:18 the enemies of Jeremiah are made to say that "the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet," meaning that all three groups will help them to destroy Jeremiah. From this passage it is apparent that the "wise men" held a recognized place in Jewish life, ranking with priests and prophets. Their contribution to the national life was probably far greater than we are commonly led to suppose. The message of the prophets, coming to us as it does through the medium of critical scholarship, is intelligible and acceptable to us. To the prophets' own contemporaries their message must have sounded very much like some of the fanatical preaching of our own day. The message had to be tempered and softened if it was to be accepted by the multitudes. That function of tempering and softening was performed by the "wise men." They translated the prophetic message—or as much of it as they accepted—into the terms of everyday life and applied it individually to the solution of human problems.

The "wise men" were the humanists of their day. They were not concerned with the central prophetic ideas of the Kingdom of God nor with the meticulous ritual service of the temple. They were concerned primarily with nature and with man. They believed in God and in the necessity for religion. They accepted in general the teaching of the prophets. But in the practical affairs of life, as they saw it, man was a law unto himself. His life was explainable in the light of general laws which man himself knew or could easily discover.

This naturalistic element of Jewish thinking, like the naturalism and positivism of modern times, had something in its favor. It engendered in men a necessary prudence in practical affairs, the influence of which is still felt in modern religion. It fostered what we might call a scientific and sensible view of the natural world. On the other hand there was this to say against it, that like the Deism of the eighteenth century, it tended to push God entirely off the stage of human history

into a universe of his own which had no relation, or only a minor relation, to man's life. God had wound up the clock of man's universe and had gone off to his private heaven, leaving the universe to run itself.

There was one writer belonging to this humanist school who did not find its teaching adequate. We know him only as the writer of the Wisdom of Solomon. The humanists, while holding the orthodox Jewish view that serious troubles were the result of wrongdoing, departed from the orthodox and prophetic view in that they believed small troubles to be the result of imprudence. This humanist view did not satisfy the writer of the Wisdom of Solomon. He saw that the poor, however prudent they might be, were often oppressed by the rich. He saw that pious and godly men often suffered in time of religious persecution by the very fact that they *were* pious and godly. The operation of natural laws did not explain adequately the problem of human suffering. Hence, men like the writers of Job, Ecclesiastes, and the Wisdom of Solomon sought a deeper explanation. The writer of the Wisdom of Solomon found that explanation in the justice of God. When the scales of justice did not balance in this life, he looked beyond the gate of death to a balancing of the scales in the life beyond. If we today have a Christian faith in immortality to sustain us in the trials and sufferings of life, we can be grateful to men like the writer of the Wisdom of Solomon who taught their fellow Jews to see clearly for the first time that this physical existence is not all of life, but that it is part of an infinite and eternal life which goes out beyond the bounds of time and space.

The book of the Wisdom of Solomon has two clearly marked divisions, the first ten chapters forming the first and the remaining nine chapters the second. In spite of the authority of outstanding scholars like Grimm and Gregg to the contrary, it would seem to the general reader that Charles is right in assigning the two sections to different authors. Even to the reader of the English version, a depth of thought and a magnificence of imagery are apparent in the first section which are utterly lacking in the second. The message, too, in each part is distinctive. The message of the first section is that the righteous man is linked with God by the divine Wisdom in this life and by a blessed immortality after physical death. The second section is for the most part a review of early Hebrew history with a view to prove that the Hebrews were punished because they sinned while their enemies were punished that they (the Hebrews) might be helped. The redeeming

feature of the second section is its emphasis upon the goodness of God. God is represented as loving *all* men. "For thou lovest all things that are," the author says, "and abhorrest nothing which thou hast made; for never wouldst thou have made anything, if thou hadst hated it." God punishes his creatures to correct them. Even the enemies of the chosen people are punished to give them an opportunity to repent, although apparently with the foreknowledge that they will not repent, being "a cursed seed from the beginning."

It is the first section of the book which concerns us primarily in this paper. It is this part which gives the book its reputation of being "the most attractive and interesting book in the Apocrypha."² Moreover, to those whose religious thinking has been determined so largely by the teaching of the Hebrew prophets, as the thinking of Protestantism has been, the interpretation of the doctrine of retribution found in the first part seems by far the more realistic and just. To place the good and the evil man in essentially the same category, as the second section might be interpreted as doing, seems to us not to solve the problem of human suffering but to magnify it. To obliterate moral distinctions is to put oneself in the place of the ungodly who feel free to oppress the just because good and evil are alike transitory. "Let us enjoy the good things that are present," the ungodly say, "Let us oppress the poor righteous man, let us not spare the widow, nor reverence the gray hairs of the aged" (2:6 and 10). These ungodly, the atheists and skeptics of that day, as reported by the writer of the Wisdom of Solomon, anticipated Nietzsche in making not justice in the moral sense but the will to power the law of life. "Let our *strength*," they said (*italics mine*), "be the law of justice: for that which is feeble is found to be nothing worth" (2:11).

Against that blurring of moral values the writer of the first section of the Wisdom of Solomon registers a gentle but firm protest. There is a difference, he maintains, between good and evil. For the good and the wise there is life; for the evil and foolish there is spiritual death here and hereafter: "For whoso despiseth wisdom and nurture, he is miserable and their hope vain, their works unprofitable" (3:11). There is, it is true, an ephemeral quality in life, but that ephemeral quality attaches to the wicked and foolish life. Riches and the pride that trusts therein will pass away

² R. H. Charles: *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*. Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1913. Two volumes. Vol. I, p. 518.

like a shadow, and as a post that hasteth by; and as a ship that passeth over the waves of the water, which when it is gone by, the trace thereof cannot be found, neither the pathway of the keel in the waves. . . . For the hope of the ungodly is like dust that is blown away with the wind; like a thin froth that is driven away with the storm; like as the smoke which is dispersed here and there with a tempest, and passeth away as the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but a day (5:9, 10, and 14).

The righteous, on the other hand, shall receive the reward of life eternal.

The righteous live forever; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the most High. Therefore they shall receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand; for with his right hand shall he cover them, and with his arm shall he protect them (5:15-16).

And again:

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die; and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction; but they are in peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality (3:1-4).

The writer is careful not to impute the fault of man's sinfulness to God. He does not explain how sin came first into the human heart (though the "fall" is alluded to in 10:1), but he is clear in affirming that the world as God created it was without sin. Even physical death was not present in the beginning but found its way into human life through the instrumentality of the devil. "Through envy of the devil came death into the world; and they that do hold of his side do find it," but in the beginning "God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity" (2:24 and 23).

This idea of immortality for man is a Greek idea. At any rate it is not Jewish. The earlier Jewish teaching of the Wisdom Literature, as found in certain parts of Proverbs, gives no place to consideration of a future life. The scales of justice are balanced on this side of the grave. The good are rewarded and the evil punished here and now. "The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish; but he casteth away the substance of the wicked," says the wise man in Proverbs 10:3. Again in the 30th verse he says, "The righteous shall never be removed; but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth."

A second stage of development of the problem of human suffering is evidenced in the Book of Job and in Psalms like the 73d,⁸ where ex-

⁸Our attention has been called to this development by Professor A. B. Davidson (*Expositor* xi, pp. 335ff., cited by J. A. F. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, Cambridge at the University Press, 1909, p. xxx).

ceptions occur which perplex and disturb the mind of the righteous man. "For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked," cries the despairing psalmist, "For there are no bands in their death but their strength is firm" (or as Moffatt translates, "No pain is theirs, but sound, strong health"). "They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men" (Psalms 73:3-5). The third stage is reached when the believer finds an explanation for the apparent inequities of human life and accepts suffering, seeing it to be an inevitable fact of existence (as in Ecclesiastes), a test of man's character (as in Job), or a weakness of physical life to be removed in the life hereafter (as in the Wisdom of Solomon).

The manner by which the soul passes from mortal life to immortality is also Greek. There is no clearly defined judgment day, such as we would expect to find in a Jewish system of thought. The soul passes immediately after death to its state of immortality. It is immortal by reason of its very nature. The soul, as the Greek philosophers and the writer of the Wisdom of Solomon conceived it, is a separate entity, not a mere shade or shadow of the living personality.

In the Hebrew conception the body was all-important. The soul, or *nephesh*, was the life-giving principle of the body; and it was the *nephesh* which went down to Sheol. ("Principle" is not the right word. The Hebrews knew nothing of psychology and made no distinctions in such matters. The body was part soul, and the soul part body. As a matter of fact, in some passages in the Old Testament, especially in Numbers, where the Authorized Version has "body," the Hebrew word is *nephesh*.) In the Greek conception it was the soul which was important. The body is a prison of the soul, the chrysalis of the butterfly. In the Hellenistic language of the Wisdom of Solomon, "The corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind" (9:15). The freeing of the soul from its earthly shell is a kind of metamorphosis like the emerging of the butterfly from its chrysalis. The after state and the earthly state from which it emerges are parts of one process.

The depreciation of the body indicated in the above quotation, an inheritance from Platonism, is not carried by our author to the point, as it is in Philo and in Paul, where the body itself is sinful in its nature. Chapter 8, verse 20 tells us that the body of Solomon when Wisdom first came into it was "undefiled." Further, in the fourth verse of the first chapter the author says, "into a malicious soul wisdom shall not

enter; nor dwell in the body that is subject to sin." But he makes clear repeatedly his belief that there are some in whose bodies Wisdom does dwell. Hence, the body cannot have been in the author's thinking inherently sinful. Gregg comments, quoting Drummond, "the soul's tenement is in itself morally neutral, reflecting the hues of virtue or guilt which belong to the animating spirit."⁴

The mingling of Greek with Jewish thought so characteristic of the Wisdom of Solomon does not result in a perfect synthesis. The author cannot, and does not attempt to, reconcile his newly acquired Greek ideas with the traditional teaching of his people. The first ten chapters of the book are more Greek than Jewish, but even here we find Jewish ideas retained which are inconsistent with the Greek ideas expressed. For instance, though the writer's emphasis in the matter of retribution is upon the future life, he cannot free himself from the Jewish conception of a triumph of the Jews over their enemies here and now. In chapter three, after declaring the doctrine of immortality for the righteous, he immediately passes to a pronouncement which sounds very much like a proclamation of the Messianic age. Of the righteous he says, "in the time of their visitation they shall shine, and run to and fro like sparks among the stubble. They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign for ever" (3:7-8).

Another instance is in 7:6, where the author expresses the Greek idea of the common lot that falls to all men regardless of rank or station. "For all men have one entrance into life, and the like going out." But the Hebrew idea of the superiority of the chosen ones asserts itself. "He hath care for his elect" (3:9), the author says of God, and goes on to say in 4:15, "that his grace and mercy is with his saints, and that he hath respect unto his chosen."

The influence of Greek thought is nowhere in the book more apparent than in its doctrine of Wisdom. The very selection of wisdom as the great vitalizing principle of life and religion points to the union of Greek with Hebrew thought which the book helped to effect. The Hebrew prophets, if they had been looking for a principle to personify as the intermediary between God and man, would without any doubt have selected Righteousness. They were concerned with God's goodness—his justice and his love. The power of man's life as it came from God lay, so the prophets taught, in will and conscience. Magnificent as that conception was, it needed something to complete it.

⁴ H. Drummond, *Philo Judaeus* 1:20; Gregg, *op. cit.*, xliv.

The monism had to become a dualism before it could be an adequate expression of man's life, to say nothing of the life of God. Greek and Hebrew had to walk hand in hand. Knowledge and faith, mind and will, head and heart, reason and conscience—both had to be seen as parts of the divine plan, as opposite sides of the coin of God's revelation to men.

The Hebrew element in the author's concept of Wisdom appears in his insistence, added though it is as a kind of afterthought, that Wisdom is itself a gift of God. Wisdom is of nature in a sense, to be sure, as we might expect from a Greek view; but in a larger sense, the author means to say, Wisdom is not of nature but of grace. Wisdom, it is true, is in a measure a matter of discovery. Wisdom is given to those who seek her. "Whoso seeketh her early shall have no great travail; for he shall find her sitting at his doors. . . . For she goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her" (6:14 and 16). But in the larger sense Wisdom is not discovered, she comes only with revelation. "I perceived," Solomon is made to say, "that I could not otherwise obtain her except God gave her me" (8:21). God's purpose cannot be learned, it must be revealed. "And thy counsel," the author prays in 9:17, "who hath known except thou give wisdom, and send thy Holy Spirit from above?" Pre-eminently expressive of the author's dependence upon God for the gift of Wisdom is that superb prayer in which John Wesley found courage and inspiration for the dark hour of his life. Wesley, I am sure, is not the only one who has thought that prayer one of the supreme prayers of all the ages: "O God of my fathers, and Lord of mercy, who hast made all things with thy Word. . . . Give me wisdom, that sitteth by thy throne; and reject me not from among thy children."

The importance of the book of Wisdom for us Christians lies in part, as has been indicated, in its foreshadowing of the Christian idea of immortality. Perhaps even more its importance for us lies in its relation to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. We must see this relationship, I believe, if Christianity is to continue to be the world religion it is.

The intellectual world outside the church and multitudes in the church itself look upon the Christian idea of the Trinity as a naïve survival of an authoritarian faith. And when we consider the ways in which that idea has often been presented, we must acknowledge that this attitude is not without foundation. Christian teachers, Catholic and

Protestant alike, have often—I am almost constrained to say "always"—given us as children, or even as mature students, the impression that the Christian doctrine of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit leaped full-grown into Christian thinking in the New Testament or in the Council of Nicea. They have not taught us, as they should have done, that this teaching, like many other elements of our faith, was a gradual growth over centuries of time and in widely scattered areas of the world. It, like other Christian teachings, is an attempt to explain the faith that men have already found, more accurately Christianity would say, to interpret the vision which has been revealed to them.

And we must, if rational existence has any meaning, seek to understand the faith we have. Such a seeking is, to be sure, not to find perfect fulfillment in this life. It is an attempt to know the unknowable, to see the invisible, to touch the intangible, to apprehend the inapprehensible. But it is just such attempts on the part of man to know the world he lives in that in all areas of human thinking have given man a dignity which raises him above the level of the brute creation.

The writer of the Wisdom of Solomon, then, was trying to find the solution to a real problem. His Hebrew tradition had taught him that God was a power working in the world. He inspired men. He directed human life. He appeared to men as the "angel of Yahweh." He exalted and cast down the nations. He visited swift vengeance upon the wicked and rewarded the righteous. God was *immanent* in the world. On the other hand there was a sense in which God was separated from his world. He existed before the world. "Before the mountains were brought forth or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." God was *transcendent*. He rose above and stood apart from the world that he had made. How can God be at once immanent and transcendent? That is the problem which the writer of the Wisdom of Solomon tries to solve.

To how great an extent Hebrew thinking was influenced by that of other nations in the early centuries it is not always easy to say. But of one thing we may be sure: namely, that this apparent contradiction between the immanent and transcendent God did not become a problem until the Greek period. It was not until the Hebrew mind came into contact with the Greek mind that it began to think of metaphysical problems at all. The Hebrew mind was a practical, not a speculative mind. It concerned itself with religion, not with philosophy

and theology; with morality, not with epistemology and psychology and metaphysics.

The Greek mind focused attention upon the problem first of all by bringing it into the realm of psychology. In early Hebrew thinking God had never been, in the strict sense, immanent. He was in the *world*, but he was not in *man*. God inspired man, but his inspiration was always a force external to man. It required a rational Greek mind to see that if God is in the world then he must be in man's mind. Man's thoughts must be in some sense God's thoughts. So the Stoics taught that God pervaded the whole universe, including man's mind, just as the soul pervaded the body. God was immanent in the world. Indeed God, in Stoic thinking, *was* the world.

The Epicureans carried the idea of God to the opposite extreme. God was not in the world in any sense. God—or rather the gods, as they believed—was entirely separate from the world. He was not interested in men. He did not, in fact he could not, influence their actions. He lived in a divine world entirely apart from men. He was transcendent.

These two conceptions of God, together with the earlier ideas of Plato, and, some think, even of Heraclitus found their way into the thinking of the Jewish community centered in Alexandria. It became then the problem of these thinkers to reconcile the apparently contradictory conceptions of God. The Greek influence emphasized the transcendence of God, the distance of God from his world, and introduced into Jewish thinking in the Wisdom Literature generally that humanism, naturalism, and positivism of which we have already spoken.

On the other side was the Hebrew insistence that God was somehow related to his world, an insistence which would find echo in Stoicism. The writer of the book which we are discussing found that link between the immanent and the transcendent God in Wisdom, created yet uncreated, begotten yet unbegotten, separable from God in one sense yet in another inseparable from him. She is not God, yet she has all the attributes of deity. She is "the worker of all things." In the words of Gregg, she possesses "all the moral qualities of God without his self-determination. . . . She personifies the train of causal sequences that connect the act of will in the mind of God with the object upon which he wills to act."⁵

That twofold concept of the immanence and transcendence of God was brought to perfect expression in the Fourth Gospel. But the way

⁵ Gregg, *op. cit.*, xxxvff.

was prepared for the expression of that truth by the obscure writer of the Wisdom of Solomon, who, two centuries before John, taught the world to see that the great Creator and Sustainer of all the starry worlds is in some way a part of our own life. The psalmist caught a glimpse of that truth when he declared that the God who "telleteth the number of the stars," for all his majesty and power and separateness from his creation, is the same great Being who "healeth the broken hearted." He lives in our life, as Jesus supremely taught us, to illumine our minds and purify our hearts and bring us into fellowship with himself. His Spirit is the Comforter, i.e., the Strengtheners, or, to use the Greek word, the *Paraklete*, the Advocate who pleads the cause of sinful men and reconciles them with the eternal Father.

The world could not find that truth in its fullness until it had found another truth. It could not believe in a God immanent in human life until it had come to believe that even more profound truth; namely, that God through Christ had come upon the stage of human history and lived the life of man. I am reminded of the incident in the play, *Green Pastures*, when God, having come to earth, meets the prophet Hosea and is persuaded by the prophet's preaching that there is hope for man and that he (God) must not destroy him. If we were interpreting the life of Jesus in that childlike fashion we might say that the Holy Spirit could not come upon men until God through Jesus dwelt with men. We might say that the eternal Father was persuaded through the ministry of Jesus that he must live with men, that he must dwell in their hearts if he was to redeem them and bring them all at last back to him.

However childlike that explanation would be, it would be like that explanation of *Green Pastures* and like that other explanation of the writer of the Wisdom of Solomon. It would be simply an attempt to explain a faith that we have found. That faith is a threefold faith. It says, first, that there is an eternal Father in whose life is the source of all our life; second, that that great Being has entered into history and thereby has given human life a passion and a purpose that it never had before; and, third, that his eternal Spirit dwells in us as we seek to walk the Master's way, pointing us ever onward and upward toward a greater and a more glorious life. The writer of the Wisdom of Solomon is one of the forerunners of that great faith.

Alexander Campbell's Defense of Revealed Religion

R. FREDERICK WEST

Campbell is remembered chiefly as a sectarian; but in his own day he made a significant contribution to the defense of Christianity against deism and atheism.

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL (1788-1866) was an unashamed Christian controversialist. And he has always been a subject of more controversy than study by his interpreters. During his more mature years, he frankly stated his work as a religious leader: "We philosophize with philosophers. We preach the gospel to sinners. We teach the initiated and untaught. We debate with opponents, and cherish good will for all mankind."¹ There is no better description of the man both as a primitive gospel leader and as an apologist of the Christian faith universal.

Oddly enough, Alexander Campbell has been remembered chiefly in connection with those controversial subjects which were perhaps the least important in the light of modern religious trends and needs. He is recalled mostly for his battles over denominational issues among believers in Christianity. Yet he was equally concerned with the rising opposition to Christianity and its institutions from unbelievers. Much of his attention was given to the growth of naturalistic skepticism and secularism in the modern world. And much of his energy was spent in urging Christendom to recover its lost sense of urgency from Christian eschatology.

During the last decades of the eighteenth century the religious faith of America was challenged by the vogue of deism—the "natural religion" of the Enlightenment. Deism was advocated as the only true religion. Its champions appealed to liberty-loving Americans in the name of "free thought"; but the churches, prizing freedom just as highly, called the movement "infidelity."

Basic to deism was its attack against all organized religion within the Hebrew-Christian tradition based upon divine revelation. Deism promoted what was regarded as a new religion by substituting reason for faith and nature for the Bible as ultimate sources for religious truth and

¹ *The Millennial Harbinger*, Bethany, 1852, p. 86.

inspiration. This type of religion became fashionable in certain sophisticated circles of American society. However, in some circles atheism was upheld as the more logical type of free thought. Both deists and atheists found it popular to belittle the traditional Christian beliefs in divine revelation and to proclaim the universe as a self-sufficient machine.

However, during the last part of the 1790's and the first part of the nineteenth century, America experienced a marked recovery from the threat of deism and atheism. Three Christian movements are usually described as contributing greatly to this lasting interest in and commitment to revealed religion. These movements are the Second Great Awakening in New England, the Great Revival on the Western frontier, and the Methodist movement under Francis Asbury.

But a fourth distinct movement, although later and not entirely unrelated to the others, needs to be stressed for its contribution to the recovery of America from the threat of deism and unbelief. This is known as the primitive gospel movement. The primitive gospel movement included a variety of communions which arose in the nineteenth century to try to restore New Testament Christianity. Among them Alexander Campbell was the outstanding figure.² He was the most influential leader of the movement in challenging the claims of natural religion and in arousing American commitment to revealed religion.

The contribution of Alexander Campbell to American life has never been studied from this perspective. As distinct from the other movements, Campbell began his religious leadership in America with a predisposition to the philosophy of the Enlightenment. In fact, he sympathized with most of the criticisms which the freethinkers raised against the established churches and their traditional views of revealed religion.

Alexander Campbell's particular primitive gospel group was known as "Disciples of Christ" or "Reformers." By 1832 they merged with

² Alexander Campbell was born in County Antrim, Ireland, on September 12, 1788. His education was directed by his father, Thomas Campbell, a minister of the strict Seceder or Antiburgher Presbyterian Church. Thomas Campbell graduated with honors in 1781 at the University of Glasgow. In 1807 he came to America to minister to some small Seceder churches in Washington County, Pennsylvania. Two years later, because of objections to their Synod's policy of closed communion services, Thomas Campbell and a handful of sympathizers formed "The Christian Association of Washington" in an effort to avoid sectarianism by accepting the Bible alone as the rule of Christian faith and practice.

After a year at the University of Glasgow, Alexander Campbell came to America in 1809. He supported his father's views, and in 1811 helped him to reorganize The Christian Association of Washington into a regular church. The new church celebrated the Lord's Supper weekly, practiced immersion, assumed the name "Disciples of Christ," and disavowed creedalism in attempts to revive a simple New Testament Christianity.

Alexander Campbell became a successful religious editor, lecturer, debater, educator, and farmer in what is now West Virginia. He founded Bethany College and served as its first president. He was the first president of the American Christian Missionary Society, and served as one of the early vice-presidents of the American Bible Society.

another uniquely American primitive gospel movement called "Christians" who were combined from several similar groups under the leadership of Barton W. Stone. Alexander Campbell soon became the dominant leader of these united primitive gospel forces. Because of this connection, he has been known especially as an individualistic sectarian who helped to create a new denomination in an attempt to rid Christendom of all denominationalism.

Nevertheless, in his own times, Alexander Campbell was also known as a defender of revealed religion and the Christian faith universal. Modern interpreters have sometimes overlooked this contribution partly because of their tendency to read the later development of the movement back into the early leader. Moreover, Alexander Campbell was so influenced by the philosophy of the Enlightenment that it has been possible for some of his followers to overlook his commitment to revealed religion. Some have maintained that he placed reason above faith and nature above the Bible in seeking to understand Christian truth. Some have described him as though he were a twentieth-century humanist.

Although he concurred with many of the criticisms of natural religionists against the traditional views of revealed religion, Campbell's watchword was "liberty," not free thought. The liberty which he treasured was derived from his own commitment to the Christian gospel and to his American citizenship. Actually, a great part of his writings, speeches, educational program, and religious leadership was devoted to the challenge of modern naturalism. This involved a growing concern for the "deists, skeptics, and Infidels" whom in their modern guises he regarded as hangovers from the same old trio that sang skeptical tunes during the French Revolution. He paid wide attention to the new naturalistic "sciences," "philosophies," "social systems," and their leaders—from Owenism to phrenology, from spiritualism to geology, from Fanny Wright's feminist reformism to Samuel Underhill's militant atheism. The result was a systematic campaign against natural religion in both its popular and its more sophisticated nineteenth-century forms.

The turning point in Campbell's career came in 1829 when he debated Robert Owen, the utopian secularist, on the nature and evidences of Christianity as contrasted with the latter's "social system" which was offered as the cure-all for the world's ills. Until then, there was some question as to whether Campbell himself would be an opponent of all established Christianity. He had traveled a long way with the natural religionists. He had been a skeptic with them of conventional Chris-

tianity and its absolutism. In fact, many church leaders accused him of being "a deist," "a skeptic," and "an Infidel." Others charged that he was "sweeping away the vitals of religion"; and some described "Campbellism" as his attempt to create a "new religion" of his own.³

To an extent Campbell deserved some of his earlier heretical titles. "*Campbellism*" to its ecclesiastical opponents was a symbol of a haughty spirit in an inherently negative attack upon organized Christianity. This is no accident. It coincided with Campbell's background and with the materials with which he fought ecclesiasticism during his most negative-minded period. This bitter individualism flourished on the Jacksonian frontier while he was editor of the *Christian Baptist*.

CONCURRENCE WITH FREE THOUGHT

Campbell was familiar with the writings of Voltaire, Volney, Godwin, Paine, Rousseau, Hobbes, Hume, Bishop Herbert, and the Earl of Shaftesbury. He was steeped in the works of John Locke, which became the popular base for both the natural religion and the defense of revealed religion for the advocates of the Enlightenment. Moreover, Campbell was a habitual reader of French works. His sympathy was with the people of the French Revolution in their struggles against the clerics and the organized church.

Like the leaders of the French Revolution, Campbell in his early anti-ecclesiasticism saw the whole system of the clergy as corrupt, greedy, presumptuous, and tyrannical. He used the French revolutionaries' neat generalizations and slogans: "the rights of man," "priestcraft," "reason," "common sense," "liberty," "kingcraft," "creeds," "nature," and "tyranny." He shared the vanity, the ambition, and the expediency of the Paine-Voltaire type of caustic cynicism in his own popular drive against ecclesiasticism. He, too, knew how to arouse liberty-loving patriotism against the organized church and its leadership. He dramatized his own reform movement as a "*final revolution*" to free the people from all oppressors. Although he championed the common people, there is little evidence that Campbell really loved them any more than did Voltaire, who likewise was an aristocrat of intellectualism at heart.

Consequently, during his extremely negative period Alexander Campbell was almost a freethinker in both spirit and content. As early

³ *Op. cit.*, 1831, pp. 216, 221, 250. This is not an effort to interpret all of Campbell's anti-ecclesiasticism in terms of simple and single causation. W. E. Gates, W. E. Garrison, B. L. Smith, C. R. Athearn, F. Kershner, and others have described other influences.

as 1832, he observed, "We became skeptics in everything sectarian—in everything in religion—except the Bible."⁴ The Bible was his point of departure from the natural religionists, for to him it was the symbol and vehicle of revelation and therefore of essential Christianity to believers. However, this did not prevent him from adopting much of the attitude and strategy of the opponents of revealed religion. Although he described free thought as "a false but fascinating philosophy," it was hard for him to make the transition from a sort of free-thinking sectarian to a churchman and apologist of the Christian faith as he entered a more constructive period of religious leadership. While debating Owen, he confessed, "I am not as skeptical in skepticism as Mr. Owen is in Christianity"; it is "lawful to learn from the enemy."⁵

ESCHATOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

Nevertheless, Campbell was as skeptical of the absolutism of the Church of Nature as he was of similar claims to infallibility in traditional Christianity. He explored the techniques of the natural religionists in seeking to undermine the established religious order, but this extremely negative trend ran its course. By 1830 his strategy had changed in terms of a *conscious acceptance of a new role in religious leadership in the life of the nation. Now his mission in America was to help announce and introduce the Christian millennium through the Anglo-Saxon peoples.* In the long run, Christian eschatology instead of natural religion had the greater influence in shaping Campbell's career.

Until this turning point had been reached, he had thought of the work of restoring primitive Christianity and unifying Christendom primarily as a negative task. As editor of the *Christian Baptist*, he had felt that all that was needed was to "unmask the clergy and their kingdom." The job of purifying and unifying Christendom seemed that simple! But to Campbell as editor of the *Millennial Harbinger* after 1830, the task was more urgent and less simple. Christianity urgently needed the ministry, democratic organization, and world-wide planning before the millennium would fully come. He became more discriminating in attacking the corruptions and the leadership of established Christianity and traditional theology. The "enemy" was no longer seen in the mere existence of other Christian bodies or of their clerical leadership—but in the naturalistic skepticism, the paganism, the world of injustice, the

⁴ *Op. cit.*, 1832, p. 313.

⁵ *Campbell-Owen Debate*, Vol. II, p. 133.

Roman Catholicism and the resulting sectarianism, which all Christendom faced.

Before the millennium would arrive, the spirit of Jesus Christ must reign over all the world. Thus, to Campbell, a defense of revealed religion was needed to convince the world of the inadequacy of natural religion and of the human need for Christianity as a divinely revealed religion and as a universally acceptable faith. To do this, however, the sectarianism and the Roman Catholicism which had produced skepticism must be abandoned. Missionary organizations and Bible societies, which Campbell had formerly fought, were now essential to convert the Moslem and pagan world. A well-rounded educational program would help to conquer skepticism, sectarianism, and Roman Catholicism. A Christian conception of justice and world government must be embraced in order to abolish slavery, social injustices, and war. The Anglo-Saxon world was destined to become God's missionary among all modern nations. The Disciples of Christ would help pave the way for the union of all Christians through the restoration of New Testament Christianity before the millennium would come. Churchmanship, not detached Christian individualism, he now saw was urgent. Interdenominational co-operation in all matters upon which the churches could agree was now essential to draw Protestant strength together as a step toward the union of Christendom.

In view of this trend, it is no accident that Campbell began to use the term, "The Millennial Church." And it is no accident that Elder John Taylor, in *Campbellism Exposed*, wrote of Campbell as "Daniel's he-goat."

Campbell rejected a magical view of the Second Coming. He had no confidence in the "One Day Judgment" to end the present order of things. He disallowed the Millerite, the Mormon, and the Owenite views of the millennium. He believed that the millennium would precede the coming of the Lord, but doubted that this coming would mean a physical return of Jesus Christ. He became confident that the millennium would arrive in proportion to the restoration of primitive Christianity. This led to a note of urgency and need for the Christian institutions. Although he refused to name specific dates, his eschatological excitement was at its highest peak in the early 1830's. It broadened into a growing concern for church organizations and world-wide planning in the 1840's and 1850's. But by 1860 he acknowledged that the millennium was not as imminent as he had once assumed.

In spite of Campbell's transformation into a champion of the Christian faith universal, and subsequently as a leader in many of the organizations which he had formerly opposed, he was ever haunted by his old individualistic spirit. A contemporary friend and preacher in his movement noted, "Brother Campbell's weakness was in his ambition; he could not brook the idea of having a rival; he would rather have been the first man in a village, than the second man in a city."⁶ This ambition can be traced as far back as his youth in Ireland and Scotland when he delighted in the reputation of being the roller of the biggest snowballs, the best sower of grain, the best athlete among his companions, and when he early aspired to become the "best scholar in the kingdom." In religious controversy the two trends, the ambition to excel and the love of the art of competition, colored his personality and strategy. Thus, he could say at the threshold of his new role: "There is not a *rational* Deist in the universe. Of this subject I am a master, if of no other."⁷

Campbell's defense of revealed religion developed through the *Millennial Harbinger*, his debate with Owen (published afterward, with extensive sales), the *Christian Preacher's Companion* in 1836, and *Letters to a Skeptic* in 1859. This campaign was conducted through public addresses, for example at Concert and Tammany Halls in New York City. It was a vital part of his educational program when he became the founder and president of Bethany College.

The spirit of his crusade is shown in 1854 in his jubilant review of a book based upon the Elder Jeans Hartzell's debate with Joseph Barker, "an apostate Christian": "He put his foot on the infidel's head, drew his own sword, and most surely cut off his head. He has given us, in one volume, his own speeches, leaving the rights of sepulture to Mr. Barker's friends."⁸

CONTROVERSY WITH FREE THOUGHT

Campbell used three major strategies to combat natural religion. (1) He described the skeptics, deists, and infidels as heirs to the objectionable role of their namesakes of the French Revolution. (2) He used his own theory of knowledge to challenge the theories advocated by natural religionists. (3) He appealed to the genius and contributions of Christianity in history.

⁶Elder W. D. Frazee, *Reminiscences and Sermons*, Nashville, Gospel Christian Advocate Publishing Company, 1892, p. 115.

⁷*Christian Baptist*, Vol. IV, pp. 40-41.

⁸*Op. cit.*, 1854, p. 472.

Campbell maintained that the deism, atheism, and infidelity of the French Revolution were basically a reaction against a corrupt Roman Catholicism, the sectarianism and creedalism which it caused, and the low morals of professed Christians. But such freethinkers are always indiscriminate reasoners who fail to distinguish the true coins of Christianity from their many counterfeits and to recognize that, "if Christianity was persecuted by its enemies, it was corrupted by its friends." Skeptics are unusually uninformed religiously, negative-minded, and unable to see Christianity and life as a whole. Skeptics usually are leaders of perverted genius; they are as speculative, dogmatic, biased, and sectarian as any professed Christians. They can agree upon nothing except to oppose revealed religion. Christians at least have certain principles upon which they can agree, including the Bible, an honorable tradition, and the mind and spirit of Christ which condemn them for their own greed and personal interests.

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Campbell maintained that no intelligent Christian would fear sound reason, philosophy, or science. He was convinced that "the voice of nature will never contradict the voice of revelation." Yet he had no patience with natural religion which was based upon the assumption that man is able to arrive at essential religious knowledge by his own unaided reason through the "light of nature." To Campbell, man receives all his basic religious knowledge, not through speculative reasoning or innate ideas, but through a trusting faith in a God who speaks to man and discloses himself and his saving power through the events of human history.

He appealed to Locke, Hume, and Bacon as authorities in laying the principles for a sound understanding of human experience and human knowledge. He assumed that man is both an animal and a spiritual creature, and has both material and spiritual knowledge. All original ideas of the physical world possessed by man are the result of sense perception and reflection, once man has learned the use of speech and language through experience. Man cannot derive ideas of the material world except through his five senses, each of which must have an appropriate model or archetype of the ideas presented which it is peculiarly fitted to convey.

Campbell maintained that man's rational powers are circumscribed by these simple ideas. Once the ideas of external objects are obtained,

the intellect operates upon them as a manufacturer operates upon the raw materials which he derives. But the human mind is a manufacturer only, and not a creator, by nature and function. Imagination to the intellectual world is comparable to mechanical ingenuity in the physical world. Man is "*dependent upon the given*" for all the primary materials with which he works. He can change and modify, but cannot create, the given stock. Imagination has unlimited power to abstract, compound, and combine qualities from basic ideas already known. Man can convert a piece of wood into polished furniture, or produce a Sphinx unlike anything in nature, but he must always abstract on the basis of the known and the given.

Campbell appealed to physics for an analogy to illustrate this thesis: according to physics man "can neither create" nor destroy "one particle of matter." Likewise the human intellect has no power to create a basic or original idea. Yet, he argued, man has the idea of God as "creative power," and there is no such archetype existing in physical nature. How can man derive the original ideas of spiritual realities without having the models in nature upon which his senses can operate? The answer is divine revelation. Man must rely upon a creative power which is not his own to account for the origin of his basic spiritual ideas. The physical world would leave us blind to a spiritual world if it were not for the light of revelation received through faith. All basic spiritual ideas are the result of revelation directly from God or indirectly through the traditions of society influenced by previous experience of revelation. But once the simple or original ideas of God and of a spiritual realm are revealed to man, nature and human reason have unlimited resources to verify the given insight.

Campbell was a radical advocate of this theory of revelation. Here he went beyond John Locke. He completely repudiated Locke at one important point; he rejected the ability of man's natural reason to arrive at the idea of God by inference or intuition. He charged that such theorists as Locke always begin with the idea of God in their minds and then "fondly imagine" that they have acquired it by natural reason.

Locke and other philosophers who have rejected the doctrine of innate ideas and have traced all our simple ideas to sensation and reflection, have departed from their own reasonings when they have attempted to show that, independent of supernatural revelation, a man could know that there is an eternal first cause uncaused.⁹

⁹ *The Christian Baptist*, Vol. V, pp. 49-56.

With this departure from Locke, Campbell left no place for natural religion, although he had a high appreciation for natural theology. He taught "natural theology" at Bethany College, but refused to use the expression as a verbal equivalent of "natural religion." Once the idea of God is derived through revelation, Campbell maintained that there is a helpful place for natural theology. The "textbook" for revealed theology is the Bible, whereas the "textbook" for natural theology is nature. The Bible and nature are God's "two grand witnesses and preachers to the human race." But it is the Bible that "puts tongue" into "nature's cheek" and enables her to speak as an intelligible spiritual witness.¹⁰

In this light Campbell welcomed most of Henry Lord Brougham's *Discourse of Natural Theology*, but resented the latter's notion that natural theology should be a prerequisite to a study of revelation for light on divine reality. Brougham disapproved of those who assumed that nothing could be known about God by the light of unassisted reasoning, and classed such "reasoners" as "neither the most famous advocates of revelation" nor "the most enlightened." Campbell was stung by such a classification of his own school of thought, and charged that Brougham's reasoning would only beguile others "into the paths of Deism." Campbell used the analogy that the material world of creation is but the picture which the eye of man sees, whereas the Bible is the Word of God to the ear of the man of faith. He did not believe that it could be proved that an untaught primitive, without faith based on the light of revelation, could attain a knowledge of God and immortality by the mere exercise of his senses on the material objects around him.

Campbell classified phrenology, mesmerism, and spiritualism as new forms of natural religion which claimed infallible authority for divine truth over and above the light of revelation through the Bible. Some of his most vigorous and interesting writing was devoted to these subjects. He also took his stand against the claims that natural sciences, such as geology, could be placed above revelation as infallible authorities for religious knowledge. And he rejected Universalism and Unitarianism as new forms of deism and free thought. In spite of his defense of a six-days' creation, his fundamental conviction was that there is no conflict between true science, true religion, and true philosophy:

The Bible offers no theories of astronomy, geology, chemistry, nor mental philosophy. It fears nothing, however, from the developments of the science of matter or of mind. Ignorance of nature, of the Bible, and of true science

¹⁰ *The Millennial Harbinger*, 1836, pp. 262-264; 1853, pp. 285-292; 1857, pp. 439-451.

led the Pope and his ecclesiastics to denounce all the leading scientific innovations upon ancient opinions, on the ground, or under the pretence, that they were unfriendly to religion, and would finally destroy the credibility of the Bible. But a better knowledge of nature and of the Bible has shown that there is no discord or contradictions in their testimonies.¹¹

Campbell employed his theory of knowledge in two ways. Negatively, he used it to challenge the claims of natural religionists who he maintained could not account for the existence of spiritual ideas by pure reason without faith. Positively, he used it to try to show that Christianity is a divinely founded religion. He was convinced that revelation is in accord with both human reason and experience. He held that neither the most advanced philosophy nor the science of his day could disprove the reasonableness and probability of revelation through human history, and that neither one could be substituted for revelation as the source for basic and reliable religious knowledge of reality.

APPEAL TO CHRISTIANITY IN HISTORY

Campbell insisted that it is more important to understand the "matter" (content) of revelation than the mysterious "manner" through which it is received. The matter of revelation includes all the basic religious ideas and insights which have been gradually received and brought to a climax through the coming of Christ into history. However, in spite of this convenient distinction between the matter and the manner of revelation, Campbell did speculate upon the manner—although he denied that he was speculating. He appealed to the "plain facts" of history in the Bible as giving an adequate testimony and a foolproof method to explain the manner of revelation. This position at times led him to an extreme biblical literalism and emphasis upon miracles, even though this was not the burden of his defense of revealed religion.

The evidences on which he based his contention that Christianity is divinely founded are: miracles, prophecy, prayer, the Bible, and the genius and tendency of Christianity in history. During his *Christian Baptist* editorship, he concentrated especially upon biblical prophecy and miracles; this period was marked by extreme literalism. However, during later decades, he appealed more and more to the character and person of Jesus Christ, and to the uplifting influence of his work and teachings in history. "The simple character of Jesus Christ weighs more in the eyes of cultivated reason, than all the miracles he ever wrought."¹²

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, 1836, p. 599.

¹² *Op. cit.*, 1852, p. 662.

Campbell believed profoundly that Christianity, as led by the Spirit of God, meets the deepest human needs for an adequate knowledge of God, man, society, true virtues, and salvation. Furthermore, Christianity provides the spiritual power for man to come to terms with his own sinful nature and the world in which he lives. He was convinced that all the really great improvements in the realms of science, philosophy, political liberty, reformation in society, and education, have come from believers in the philosophy of Christianity, not from skeptics.

PERSPECTIVE IN MODERN CHRISTIANITY

This is no time or place for a complete appraisal of the life and thought of Alexander Campbell. But through more than forty years of his magazine writing, addresses, travels, and book writing, it is safe to say that he was the leading influence in the primitive gospel movement to help America recover from the threat of deism and atheism in the nineteenth century. He was a transitional figure in our religious life at a time when the claims of modern naturalism, nationalism, materialism, and churchmanship were being made upon the American mind.

Whether or not he helped to blaze the trail for adequate solutions to these vexing modern problems, he at least helped to sharpen the axe and quicken the search. He questioned the absolutism of both conventional Christianity and conventional free thought. He challenged the growing tendency to try to make either philosophy or science the source and the final arbitrator of essential Christian truth and power. He maintained that science, philosophy, and organized religion are servants, not masters, of the life of man and his spiritual cravings. And he championed the need for modern Christian apologists of revelation in the light of available theories of knowledge. But perhaps what was most important was his emphasis upon both *an unashamed Christian faith and an expectant sense of urgency as essential for the churches, if they are to be the Church in the modern world.*

The Minister's Use of Words

JOHN EDWARD LANTZ

Suggestions on the nature and use of "the most important set of tools any minister has" and the development of correct habits in speech.

SPEAKERS IN THE CHURCH should use words to help people. They should use them as a carpenter uses his hammer, saw, and square—as tools to do a job. With them a minister does his work—his thinking, his reading, his preaching, his praying. Words are not ends in themselves, but only means to the ends of Christian living.

Words are alive. It is of great importance to remember that words are not stale and musty things found only in commentaries and dictionaries, but dynamic and throbbing symbols of life. They convey meaning and mood from the speaker to his listeners. They are the most important set of tools any minister has. They make it possible for him to carry on his ministry of providing edification, encouragement, and comfort. They are avenues of communication. Thus an understanding of words and their wise use will greatly enhance the effectiveness of a minister's work, while a misunderstanding of them and their unwise use may cause him much grief and harm.

Often words do not carry the same meaning to different people. This is one reason why ministers and teachers should be so careful with their use. Many words convey different meanings in different communities. When a southerner says, "I carried my wife to church," he does not mean the same thing as when a Yankee says it. Then, too, some words change from one generation to another, so that a middle-aged minister may often discover himself using words which have a certain meaning for him but convey something else to his high-school listeners.

In addition to these differences in meaning, the tone and inflection a speaker uses in uttering a word greatly color its connotation. The word *love*, for instance, may be said in a gay, teen-age fashion or in a funereal manner; and the word *God* may be said with genuine reverence or with the artificiality and sanctimoniousness of the ministerial tone. No matter how sincere the speaker, the expression he uses in saying words greatly affect their meaning. All too many ministers unconsciously use pious, stuffy, unctuous, or hypocritical-sounding intonations which some-

times portray them as Pharisees and often partially negate the constructive value of their words.

To use words with the intention of helping people, the speaker should have a basic understanding of what they are. First, he should know that a word is the smallest unit of language which carries meaning by itself. It is not an idea, but rather the label of an idea, substance, object, or state. According to *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition, a word is:

An articulate sound or series of sounds which, through conventional association with some fixed meaning, symbolizes and communicates an idea, without being divisible into smaller units capable of independent use; that is, the smallest unit of speech that has meaning when taken by itself. . . .

Words are, then, the most elemental and basic units of language. They are like carrier pigeons which convey a message from one person to another.

Most of us listen to many more million words during our lives than we speak, read, or write. This is true even of the average minister, in spite of the great amount of formal speaking he does. Think of the vast number of words he hears at a single church conference, for example, not to mention conversing and counseling with his parishioners and listening to his wife and the radio in any time he has left! However, most of us use our second greatest aggregate number of words in speaking. In carrying on a typical day's work, the minister speaks a surprisingly large number of words.

According to Perrin¹ the average speaking vocabulary is quite small, probably not more than a third of the recognition vocabulary. This latter term refers to the words a person understands more or less accurately in reading and listening, which he may or may not use in writing and speaking. Recent studies and estimates place the recognition vocabulary of the average adult somewhere around 10,000 words and that of a well-educated adult at about 50,000. Some claim that the average college graduate has a recognition vocabulary of at least 20,000 words. Of course, these are only careful estimates, for it is impossible to have an accurate count of any one person's total vocabulary, and much less possible to ascertain the absolute average for a whole class or group of people.

The exact relationship between our various vocabularies is not fully known. Very little is actually known about the relationship of the two

¹ Porter G. Perrin: *Writer's Guide and Index to English*. Revised Edition, Scott, Foresman & Company, Chicago, 1942, p. 184.

active vocabularies, speaking and writing, to the two passive ones, listening and reading. It is likely that the speaking and writing vocabularies of the average person are about the same size but include different words, the spoken including many informal and the written many formal words. In the slow process of writing, most of us put down on paper words that we do not ordinarily use in speaking. This may be one reason why congregations generally prefer sermons preached directly to them rather than those read from manuscripts. It is likely, again, that our two passive vocabularies, listening and reading, are about the same size but include different words. Our listening vocabulary includes many informal words, since they are spoken, and our reading vocabulary many formal ones, since they are written.

ACCURATE USE OF WORDS

The problem of ascertaining the exact meanings of words manifests itself not only in translating from one language into another, but also in learning to use one's native language intelligently. The problem is basically that of trying to discover and delineate the real idea or feeling a particular word or group of words symbolize, for no word has intrinsic meaning in itself. It has meaning only as it is related to the experiences and aspirations of the people using it. Thus, technically, the problem is not so much the accurate use of words as the accurate conveying of our thoughts and feelings to other people by the use of words.

The accurate use of words is made difficult by the varied meanings a single word may have. It may have, for example, one meaning by definition and quite another by association; that is, its denotation and connotation may differ. The denotation of a word is its literal, defined meaning. It is that which is looked up in the dictionary—its definition. Any unabridged dictionary gives the definitions (denotations) of all accepted words in the English language.

The connotation of a word is its associated meaning. It varies somewhat with the experiences and convictions of each and every person using it. A person's individual connotation of a word cannot be found in a dictionary. Hence, his particular use of the word may be *inaccurately* understood by another person whose experiences and convictions differ from those of the speaker. The connotation is rooted in the person himself and can be known only in relation to his total life. Hence, it can be used accurately only as the listener understands the relationship of the word to the life of the person using it.

Take the word "church," for example. It may refer to a building or to a group of people who have a core of common religious beliefs and experiences or to a number of other things. In fact, *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition, gives nine specific meanings of the word "church." When a person speaks of a church and means by it a building, he is not likely to be misunderstood because a church building can be defined, located, seen, and felt. Thus the word can be used accurately in this sense without much danger of misunderstanding. This is its denotation.

The word "church," however, has many associated meanings, meanings which do not refer at all to the building. They refer rather to the people, or the service, or the clergy, or the professing body of believers. And when used with any one of these meanings, its connotated meaning depends upon the past experiences and present associations of the user. This meaning may be somewhat vague and abstract; hence, even when used as accurately as possible, the word may give rise to some misunderstanding.

When a Methodist layman speaks of a church he means one thing, when a Presbyterian layman speaks of a church he means something else, and when a Catholic layman speaks of a church he means still something else. Or, for that matter, when a Methodist layman of a city church speaks of his church he does so with a certain connotation in mind, and when a Methodist layman of a university church speaks of his he does so with another. No wonder it is so difficult for the churches and church people to unite!

The psalmist spoke wisely when he said:

Let the words of my mouth,
And the meditation of my heart,
Be acceptable in thy sight,
O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

(Psalms 19:14.)

He spoke wisely because the words of a person's mouth do not always adequately reveal the meditations of his heart. The good Lord, I am sure, is able to catch the intentions and attitudes back of the spoken words. And every sympathetic listener tries to do the same.

Knowing that words possess different meanings to different individuals, it behooves every speaker in the church to use his words as accurately as possible. Even then, there will remain a sufficiently large number of misunderstandings. The Revised Standard Version of the

New Testament is the outcome of the labors of those who desired that the gospel should be published in accurate terminology, and it does purportedly employ words more accurately according to present-day usage than any of the previous translations. Hence, it conveys more accurate meanings to its readers. Speakers in the church should be just as careful in conveying impressions to their listeners as were the translators of the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, if they would be faithful servants of Jesus Christ.

CAREFUL CHOICE OF WORDS

Closely related to the accurate use of words is their careful choice. Sometimes speakers not only use words vaguely and inaccurately but simply use the wrong ones. Once I attended a banquet in New York City at the Wellington Hotel. The minister who returned thanks closed his prayer by saying, ". . . and bless *thy* lives to *our* service. Amen." Naturally the name of this minister should not be divulged!

Dr. J. Emerson Ford of The Methodist Church performed a wedding ceremony during which he requested the groom to repeat after him to the bride, ". . . with all my worldly goods I thee endow. . . ." Instead of repeating in this order the groom said, ". . . with all *thy* worldly goods I *me* endow." Of course, the poor groom was so frightened he did not know what he was saying!

Julius Caesar said, "The choice of words is the source of eloquence." Quintilian, the Roman rhetorician, said the choice of words should be such, "not that language may be understood but that it cannot be misunderstood." And Joseph Conrad claimed, "He who wants to persuade should put his trust not in the right argument, but in the right word. . . . Give me the right word and the right accent, and I will move the world."

To select words carefully we must consider their effect upon the listeners. Those words should be chosen which carry with them the most meaning of a positive nature. Some words are said to be "loaded," that is, charged with certain emotional connotations. Loaded words are especially common in time of war. During World War II just to hear the word *Nazi* or *Jap* was sufficient to stop the thinking process of certain patriots and to start releasing a chain of emotional outbursts. In the present postwar era the word *communist* or *Red* sets up similar reactions in some people, as does the word *capitalist* among others, and *labor unions* among still others.

Words should be selected which convey the most positive meaning to those who are listening. In speaking to farmers, for instance, those words, phrases, and thought patterns should be employed which have significance for them, and which convey vividly the impression the speaker desires. The same principle should be followed in speaking to other groups—to laborers, merchants, or professors. This is the principle of adaptability. Jesus talked about the lilies, the sun, rain, and harvest because they were terms familiar to his audience.

CORRECT GRAMMATICAL USAGE

In addition to the accurate use of words and their careful choice, grammatical correctness is important. Speakers, to hold the esteem of their auditors, must use words according to acceptable grammatical usage and not commit such errors as "Everybody feels this is their church." This does not mean that the speaker should be so fastidious and precise that everyone notices how correctly he speaks. Far from it! He should use idioms and commonly accepted phraseology—even occasional slang—but he should employ them according to the best taste. Even parishioners who are guilty of frequent errors themselves still expect those who speak to them in church and lead them spiritually to use grammar acceptably. The Spirit of God may commandeer certain persons to teach and preach, but it is up to them to learn English grammar.

Each speaker in the church should study at least one good English grammar a year, and preferably a contemporary one to keep abreast of language trends. Speakers should know that it is not nearly such a great sin to end a sentence with a preposition now as it was a decade ago, nor is it any longer a breach of etiquette to utter a statement without a subject and a predicate.

A speaker's use of words should be checked periodically, yes, continuously, with that of other speakers, with an acceptable grammar book, and with a good, reliable dictionary. "After all, there is no such literature as a dictionary," said Sir William Osler. Adhering to preferred usages in such a dictionary will aid a speaker in using his words accurately, in choosing them carefully, and in checking their grammatical classification. Every church speaker ought to have at least three books—a good English grammar, a reliable dictionary, and a readable Bible!

THE PRONUNCIATION OF WORDS

Another troublesome area is proper pronunciation. When a young

minister leaves the seminary and goes to a rural church as pastor, should he strive to pronounce words as his parishioners do? Or when a more mature minister leaves a church in the Midwest to become pastor of one in New England, should he strive to acquire an eastern accent? If he does not, won't his people feel that he is trying to be superior and keep himself aloof?

It is true that the accepted pronunciation of words varies from country to country and from section to section within the same country. Thus there is no such thing as a correct pronunciation of words for all times and all places. The most that can be said is that there is a preferred pronunciation of a word for each time and place. This is the proper pronunciation and is the one which every speaker in the church should use insofar as he is able to do so.

Words change their pronunciation from place to place and from time to time just as they change their meaning. Thus a minister must adapt himself to the time and place in which he lives, but adapting himself does not mean that he should mispronounce words as his parishioners do. He should never do this. He has been hired because he has had the advantage of more education in things of the spirit than his people, and his people expect him to know how to speak and how to speak correctly. They want to be proud of him. They want him to make a pleasing public appearance and to do so without putting on airs.

The principle for a speaker to follow is to pronounce words the way the best educated people of the community pronounce them. And "community" should not be thought of in too narrow a sense. Rather, we should think in terms of the larger community, of an entire area or section. In the *entire* United States there are only three sections with recognized differing standards of pronunciation—New England, the South, and "General American" (the remainder of the United States). Thus, if a speaker is a native of New England, he should pronounce his words as the most cultured people of New England pronounce them. And in searching for models to emulate, he should seek those who pronounce words correctly and in doing so incorporate New England inflections and accents.

If a speaker is a native of the South, he should model his pronunciation after that of the best speakers of the South and not be ashamed of it! Southern speech at its best has some very beautiful qualities. Likewise, if a speaker is a native of any state classified as General American, he should model his pronunciation after that of the best

speakers of the whole area. The General American is rapidly becoming the accepted pattern of American speech. Most actors are now using it instead of New England or Oxford diction, and nearly all radio commentators on coast-to-coast networks employ it for their nation-wide broadcasts. Listeners in New England and in the South accept it as being in very good taste.

If a minister leaves a church in the Midwest and goes to one in New England, he should not strive to change his diction from that of General American to that of New England. New Englanders would detect his "put-on" pronunciation and tend to belittle and ridicule him. Furthermore, it would be years before he could speak the New England diction naturally and easily as his own. Do not consciously copy the speech of the community to which you move. You will no doubt incorporate unconsciously the best elements of the section, and thus develop a pattern of pronunciation that will not identify you with your native section or state. In this manner you can gradually acquire a diction of American English which has the best elements of all three major types and will be equally acceptable to all parts of the country.

Now that we have our goals of proper pronunciation established, how can we go about attaining them? In other words, how can you as a speaker improve your pronunciation? The first requisite is to develop the ability to hear the difference between the way you pronounce words and the way other people pronounce them. The spontaneous retort to such a statement by most speakers untrained in voice is that they can hear perfectly well, that their ears are quite normal. However, after an instructor or friend asks them to pronounce a word in a different way and they respond by pronouncing it the same way, they begin to realize that they simply cannot hear the fine differences of accent and intonation between their pronunciation and that of others.

Even after a person becomes convinced that his hearing acuity is poor, he still has a long way to go in developing it to what it ought to be. Here is where the value of recordings comes in. To have a recording made of your own voice and diction and have it played back to you helps you to hear your voice and your pronunciation as other people hear them. Recordings are very helpful in developing the ability to hear fine nuances of tone and inflection. They are instrumental in accentuating weaknesses, but they do very little in the way of positive correction. Much diligent drill, plus the help of a capable teacher or friend, is usually necessary to do this. Hearing acuity, however, can

be developed by careful and attentive listening and may thus build up a consciousness and a "feel for" the proper pronunciation of words.

After a speaker has developed his hearing ability and recognizes his deficiencies in pronunciation, his second task is to develop the muscles of his tongue and lips in order to be able to say the words as they ought to be said—another difficult feat. Those muscles of the tongue and lips naturally develop which are constantly used, while the unused muscles become limp and inert. When these undeveloped muscles are suddenly called upon to pronounce a word in an unaccustomed way, they simply cannot function. New muscular patterns must be developed in changing the pronunciation of a single word, and this requires much practice and patience.

The third and last step in the process of developing proper pronunciation is the breaking down of wrong habits and the development of correct ones until they become the natural and normal method of speaking. It takes a long time, often years, for a person to change his pronunciation of a word from a wrong to a correct way, and learn to say it correctly without being self-conscious.

This whole matter of the sound of words is known as *phonetics* (*phono*, sound). The study of phonetics is much too complex and comprehensive to discuss here in detail but a few facts are worthy of mention. In 1888 a group of European phoneticians formed a system of symbols indicating all the sounds in every language. These symbols became known as the International Phonetic Alphabet, commonly known by the initials IPA. This was a successful attempt to isolate all speech sounds from each of the various languages and to label each one with a written symbol. Some of these symbols correspond to our English letters and others do not. The whole theory undergirding the phonetic alphabet is that of having one sound and only one for each written symbol. Thus in learning the phonetic symbols and their corresponding sounds, one sharpens his hearing acuity markedly. Many of our young missionaries are being taught phonetics as a preliminary basis for learning foreign languages in preparation for the mission fields.

Technically, pronunciation refers to the kind of sound given to the characters of a word, to their division into syllables, and to the proper accenting of the syllables themselves. Enunciation, on the other hand, refers to the quality and duration of the vowel sounds; while articulation refers to the quality and correctness of the consonant sounds. Both enunciation and articulation are phases of pronunciation.

There are three methods of pronouncing words which are of concern to church speakers: slurring, pedantic, and proper. Slurring means running together the utterance of consonants in a slovenly manner; that is, failing especially to articulate the t's, d's, and g's, and merging or omitting other syllables or combinations of syllables. Slurring articulation often results from a lazy tongue and lips. It is undesirable and inexcusable.

Pedantic pronunciation is the opposite of slurring; it is the utterance of each and every syllable of every word in a most precise manner. It is an attempt to sound every letter of every word with equal accent, which of course produces mechanical and unrhythmical speaking. It is old-maidish, exhibitionary, and undesirable in every way.

Proper pronunciation is a compromise between the two methods noted above. It is being neither unnecessarily careless nor overly precise, but articulating in a normal manner. In proper pronunciation the vowels (breath sounds unobstructed in their passage out through the throat and mouth) will be given enough stress and duration to supply the speech with music and rhythm, and likewise the consonants (breath sounds obstructed by the soft palate, tongue, teeth, or lips in their passage out) will be given their fair share of stress in order to supply the speech with clarity and precision.

The most reliable guide to the proper pronunciation of words is *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition. One should always use the preferred pronunciation unless there is some explicit reason for not doing so. For those who know phonetics, a reliable guide is Kenyon and Knott's *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English*. If a speaker wants to know the authoritative pronunciation of a word, his safest guide is one of these two.

The proper pronunciation of words in itself cannot insure effective speaking, but it does help. It enables people to understand easily what the speaker is saying. The speaking of Wendell L. Willkie and the preaching of Dwight L. Moody would both have been even more effective than they were, had they utilized acceptable pronunciation.

Speakers in the church, especially ministers, should use words to help people live better Christian lives. Words should be used accurately, chosen carefully, connected in grammatical fashion, and pronounced acceptably. Ministers need to be as meticulous in their use of words as in the creation and selection of their ideas, for words and ideas are invariably part and parcel of each other. Both must be used judiciously in serving Christ and his people well.

The Prophetic Meaning of Sectarian Ecstasy

IRVING R. MILLER

The ecstasies of some small sects, while not a spiritually healthy phenomenon, emphasizes a truth to which our larger churches may well pay attention.

SOME YEARS AGO in a small southern town I visited the tabernacle of a Negro religious sect. Among other things I noticed that the middle-aisle posts, supporting the roof, were well padded up to a height of perhaps five feet. Upon asking the reason, I was told that it was a safety measure. Often in the grip of an overpowering religious emotion, some of the worshipers would be thrown against the posts, and it was necessary that these supports be well padded to prevent possible injury to members of the congregation.

Ecstatic outbursts as a phenomenon of religion are still with us. They are characteristic of most of the small religious sects in America today. We who are members of the older and larger churches look on such behavior with mixed feelings. Some dismiss it lightly with a shrug and a laugh; others look upon it with a sad concern and pass by on the other side. Many secretly envy the earnest praying, preaching, and zeal of the sectarians and let it go at that. But there are some who regard them with growing interest, and after a time are forced to acknowledge that the Lord is in this thing but for a long while we "knew it not."

I. THE INDIVIDUAL ECSTATIC

We cannot, however, properly and fairly understand sectarian ecstasy unless we see it, if only briefly, in the light of the best in mystical tradition. To the true mystic, ecstasy is but a step on the road that leads ultimately to God. It is never an end in itself but a means, God being always the chief good desired.

Ecstasy at its best is almost always a solitary experience. That is, the experience is not generated from without by suggestion and imitation. It originates within the individual as he waits alone before the Lord. It is, therefore, not a public display of emotion but a deep secret of the soul.

The true mystic does not regard the experience of ecstasy as being in itself alone an evidence of God's special approval. Actually, he looks upon it somewhat critically. Though it is a very great treasure to him, he is inclined to be suspicious of any treasure short of God himself. The mystic knows how treacherous and misleading are human emotions and how easily and quickly man's purpose is short-circuited.

The solitary ecstatic is reluctant to speak of his own secret meeting with God. If it is real, it is a treasure whose value is lessened the more it is displayed. If our modern ecstasies are carried out of themselves by the spirit, many of them are apparently satisfied. Not so the solitary saints of God. They know they must return to themselves, to earth, and to another level of reality. And they appraise the experience in the light of its value to their total devotional life. They will, for example, ask such questions as: What is the deposit made in my religious life as a result of this experience? What attitudes have been changed? What attitudes have been strengthened?

Although the ecstatic experience differs with each individual, we may well consider briefly what takes place in the individual at such a time. For one thing ecstasy is that religious condition in which the individual feels himself utterly out of self-control and in the hands of a greater than himself. It is a state in which the mind, emotions, will, and body become one in union with "another." One may retain an awareness that he is, as it were, caught up into the "seventh heaven," but this awareness is the only remaining element of individuality. At the time he does not know what is taking place, and when it is over he cannot say exactly what happened.

In ecstasy the conflicts, the problems, and the diversities of life are of no consequence. They are, in that high moment, like the dew which vanishes with the sun's appearing. In such a moment, a man really feels himself to be wholly what he was meant to be. He *is* in ecstasy what he senses he might become through long spiritual struggle in everyday life which looks aimless. The mystery of life, death, God, and immortality ceases to exist. In ecstasy one is not a mystery to himself. It is when the experience is over, when the tide of emotion has abated, that he stands in awe and wonder. In the experience itself one's whole life is lived so passionately, accelerated so rapidly, that he is not aware of anything save the power of the moment.

The solitary ecstatic and the sectarian ecstatic differ most when it comes to the value which they assign to the experience. The true

ecstatic is not content to go away from it without endeavoring to learn how it may permanently heighten his whole religious life. Above all, he does not permit it to narrow his spirit to an artificial emphasis on daily ritual, habits, and dress.

Furthermore, the true ecstatic sees in the experience his own oneness with all mankind, but he does not feel compelled to go and tell all men what has happened to him. Rather, he feels that his first concern is to live before God so that he is what he pretends to be. Though his religion at its roots is a private affair, his life is an open book. In short, the solitary ecstatic aims to make his entire life an act of devotion, and ecstasy is but a part of the total purpose.

II. GROUP ECSTASY

It should be obvious to the thoughtful person that ecstasy as found among modern sects is not ecstasy at its best. The sectarian ecstatic, while apparently sincere and honest, is not true to the best in mystical tradition. It will be observed, for example, that he is often too eager to tell what the Lord has done for him. He places too high a value upon the experience itself. And though he is usually quite eager to tell about the experience, he is extremely reluctant to examine it critically in order to determine its real value. He is almost superstitious in regarding the ecstatic experience as being above examination. In his thought, it is all of very great and equal value. It is the "pearl of great price" in his life. It may be he is afraid that if he examines it all value will be lost.

It is doubtful if the sectarian would be an ecstatic if divorced from his group. His emotional release is largely dependent upon external stimuli. By fervent suggestion and imitation he is stimulated to the point of turning himself loose, of letting himself go. The chances are that if he were to attempt the experience alone, with daily disciplines and practices, he would quickly bore himself and give up trying.

Any honest observation of modern group ecstasy must include the confession that much of it is really an abnormal manifestation of Christianity. The phenomenon itself is a testimony to the true psychological condition of certain classes of people. Even the normal, daily life of most sectarian ecstatics will be found upon examination to be abnormal from the standpoint of religion and psychology.

The ecstasies of the group reveal a class of people who are life-sick. They are like the garden hose when the full pressure of the

water is on but the nozzle is closed tight. Their work, their environment, their ideals and aims all converge to thwart and block the creative possibilities of their human nature. They are spiritually constipated. Ecstasy is that point where the nozzle of the hose is turned wide open, but there is no control over the threshing and swishing about of the hose. In both their everyday life and religious life they are out of control, victims of the "powers that be." The difference is that in matters of religion they are more willing victims.

III. SECTARIAN ECSTASY AND PROPHECY

Whatever we may say about the sects, we cannot dismiss lightly the fact that they are organs in the total body of the church. And if the church is the body of Christ in the world, then the health of every organ is a matter of the utmost importance. If one organ is diseased, the whole body is affected. It would appear that group ecstasism is evidence of illness, *not only in the sects but in the body itself.*

I insist there is a large element of prophecy in our modern ecstasies that we in the older churches too easily overlook to our own loss. The prophecy to which I refer is not in the conscious and deliberate mind of the ecstatic. It is not his behavior as such that is important. I am more concerned with what his actions mean for the larger churches of Protestantism, for it does appear rather obvious there is a kind of message in his madness. Such a prophecy may not be, usually is not, the intention of the ecstatic, and it is certainly not the prophetic ministry at its best. But I hazard the suggestion that sectarian ecstasy, as we have come to know it, has a message from God that even its exponents fail to understand.

As a rule, ecstatic practices are found among the exploited, the underprivileged, and the unlearned classes of people. Such persons have little or no interest in any of the older established churches. And it may be said of the latter that with few exceptions they have the same attitude toward the sects. By mutual consent a policy of "hands off" is adhered to by both sides.

Despite this deplorable condition, and largely because of it, ecstasy today may well be regarded as a prophecy that not only are the times "out of joint" but, worse still, ecclesiastical religion is "out of joint." Group ecstasism is a protest against the spiritual deadness of the older churches. Though he may be charged with being a fanatic, the ecstatic is certainly not spiritually dead or asleep. He may be ig-

norant, poor, and underprivileged, but he is not dead to the deeper yearnings of the human spirit.

One extreme, even in religion, seems to call for another; as an antidote to the lack of zeal found in established churches, the ecstatic is noted chiefly for his passion in things of the spirit. It is a fact admitted by many and felt by more that our larger churches today lack real heart-warmth and sincerity. The worshipers are not so much ardent participants as they are spectators of a ritual. Somehow the church door has been slowly closed on man's total life and only the "onlooker" in him sits in the pew. Like his hat and coat, he checks his emotional and mental nature outside the sanctuary.

It may be noted in passing that the secular world does not let man's emotional nature go begging. In the theater, at public games, and in political and social circles man still laughs, weeps, and feels deeply. In such moments he is almost a man again, and perhaps would be except that his greatest need is never satisfied. In fact, it is largely because of his central emptiness that the average man throws himself with such abandonment into the hurly-burly of the secular world.

The sectarian ecstatic, of course, protests against both the lifelessness of the church and the sinfulness of the world, and in their place puts his own tried and tested peculiar experience of God. He may and often does err in his critical judgment and discriminations, but for him, at least, religion lays claim to and in some satisfying measure meets the need of his whole nature.

The modern ecstatic also protests unknowingly against the too frequent use of "moral law" as an inspiration to Christian living. To be sure, there is the moral law by which God undergirds, guides, and controls man and history. But in the more sedate churches we are rapidly making the mistake of substituting the moral law of God for the grace of God.

From the Mosaic Law to the moral law is not a long step, and as the former was impotent to save, so is the latter. Modern man, because of his very genius, stands greatly in need of the forgiving and redeeming grace of God to enable him to obey the moral law of his nature with praise and thanksgiving. The moral law has become in the hands of many a "big stick" with which they hope to awaken Christian experience and develop character.

The sectarian ecstatic finds an emotional solution to the problem;

and while such a solution is incomplete, it is a prophecy and a warning of how far we have fallen.

Then, too, the ecstatic is protesting against our lack of certainty as regards salvation. He has evidence that convinces him beyond the shadow of a doubt that he is saved. The ecstatic experience marks the invasion of the Holy Spirit and that Spirit gives him the sense of security before God for which all men naturally hunger, many unconsciously. To be sure, the ecstatic is often too sure of himself; but, again, we must be honest at least in seeing that one extreme warrants another.

The danger for many, of course, lies in the fact that they will tire of being religiously uncertain and confused and will turn to their own devices in an effort to ease the straining reach of the soul. The ecstatic does not offer a full answer to this human need, but he prophesies a warning about our present condition and the dangers that are inherent in it.

The ecstatic today is not to be pitied, scoffed at, or imitated. He needs to be taken seriously. His apparently senseless behavior makes sense when men try to see Christianity in its total perspective. There are overtones in his joys and sufferings which we must learn to hear. Even when he speaks in tongues, he has a message whose overtones a thoughtful Christian may partially understand. He has partly succeeded in recovering for us the sense of God's majesty and holiness. The behavior of the ecstatic points as an arrow to the fact that in the presence of the Eternal, man is a creature bereft of his ordinary senses and language. God is more than Christ, but only the grace of God in Christ can help us to accept that "more" with full trust and love.

Most important of all, perhaps, the ecstatic has a positive message for all Christendom—however poorly he may express it—when in a few moments of time he experiences what he feels to be a complete surrender of himself to God. The ecstatic experience is his response to the most comprehensive demand of Christ: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). The ecstatic, in his supreme moment, feels that he is completely possessed of God's Spirit. He is, in that instant, cut off from all other relationships of life.

While I was a student in college, I went one night out of morbid curiosity to a Negro revival meeting. The meeting was being held in a

little wooden church in the country, and the building was jammed to overflowing. I stood at the window and watched as a tall Negro preacher spoke in tongues. Though I failed to catch a single intelligible word, I saw that the worshipers were definitely participants in the service.

Suddenly, without warning, a Negro mother who had been holding in her arms a small infant leaped to her feet, threw her arms into the air, and began to shout in ecstasy. She had completely forgotten her child and, had it not been for a man sitting beside her, the child would have fallen to the floor and probably been injured.

It was a pathetic, a tragic, way to prophesy, but that poor Negro mother responded completely and in an instant to the demand of Christ as she understood it. Regardless of how it might be explained by an onlooker, she felt so deeply the power of the Spirit of God that nothing less than a total response would suffice. I do not know her behavior the day following; she may in all likelihood have been the same person without any change in character. But this much is certain: for a little while she lived her life fully!

If the prophecy of the modern ecstatic could be briefly summarized, it would perhaps amount to something like this. We, in the main stream of Protestant tradition, are fast becoming stagnant pools because we are cutting ourselves off from the source of living waters—God. Our great concern with church buildings, programs, committee meetings and resolutions, financing, ritual, and a thousand and one other means of so-called Christian service really accomplishes very little. We are not only failing to meet the needs of the world, we are not even meeting the total needs of our own members. We try to serve God by the methods of feverish activity, forgetting that service begins with surrender and that surrender is the work of a life of devotion.

This is not a plea for or a defense of ecstatic practices. Ecstasy, solitary and group, is not enough in itself. Some are not intended to be ecstatics or ever to know within themselves what it is. This is a plea for us to look at ourselves just as we are and see what God sees in us. This is not a plea for social righteousness primarily; it is a plea for personal surrender and thoroughgoing life commitment. Such a life of devotion is simply a matter of practicing the presence of God daily. No man can say what the full consequences of such a practice would be. Within the church itself it would probably narrow and finally heal the growing gap between the clergy and the laity. It would reveal more

of the clay in the make-up of the clergy and more of the divine in the nature of the laity.

If one is wholly honest with God and himself, and persists in the practice of the presence of God, he will be taught in the school of suffering and joy what he really is, what he is to become, and what he is to do. For, regardless of our present low state spiritually, if we can accept it for what it is, as God accepts it, and remember that in spite of our condition God loves us just as we are, then our very helplessness may become the means whereby God will heal us, and through us the agony of the world.

When we are weak, then we are strong; but if we will not honestly admit to our true condition, then it may be said that when we are weak and think we are strong, then we are weakest. God loves us just as we are, unlovely and undeserving though we are, but he will not leave us just as we are. *Whether we face the facts of our true condition or not, God will not leave us as we are. Sectarian ecstasy is a ringing prophecy of that fact.*

Why I Prefer a Church With a Chancel

JOHN HENDERSON POWELL, JR.

The architecture of a church should itself create an atmosphere of worship and give one a sense of the presence of God.

MY PREFERENCE for a church with a chancel certainly does not derive from any inherited prejudice, there being no Catholics among my ancestors since the Reformation, and no Episcopalians that I know of. I was brought up in a fundamentalist Southern Presbyterian church, which had not only a central pulpit on a platform, but golden oak upholstered pews, converging carpeted aisles sloping down into an amphitheater-like auditorium, with a high choir loft above the pulpit, gilded organ pipes above that, and topping it all a picture window of Holman Hunt's "The Light of the World."

That was my boyhood idea of church, and I liked it. Since then I have seen different types of churches; and now I wonder how anybody could ever have built that church in which I worshiped as a boy. It cost a lot of money; but there was little, if any, worshipful atmosphere achieved by the expenditure.

I admit the beauty and charm of the simple New England meeting-house, the little white Congregational church with its lovely Greek columns and its slim Wren spire sticking up above the trees. It seems so much a part of the New England landscape, and it speaks of God in the life of the community through all the passing generations.

It is a terrible pity that the interior of so many of these lovely churches was ruined by flashy renovations in the nineteenth century, with their artificial pilasters, their fake perspectives, their gaudy decorations. It would seem that almost everything in architecture that is original with the late nineteenth century is hideous, and evidently nothing was too sacred to be spared its expensive efforts to beautify by elaborate embellishment. But occasionally one finds a simple little New England church whose interior still corresponds with the original design: the white, mahogany-trimmed box pews, the graceful Georgian pulpit in the center according to the Puritan tradition of a Bible-centered service, everything clean and white and chaste, the choir in the back of the church in a little gallery, with the organ, a nineteenth-century innova-

tion, tucked away there inconspicuously also. St. Andrew's Church in Edinburgh is like that, only unlike our colonial churches, it is oval in shape. But it has an Adam ceiling, and a high pulpit above the lectern and the communion table, with a graceful staircase leading up to it. The building is of gray stone, and has a beautiful Greek façade and a genuine Wren spire which in its proportions is the epitome of grace.

Such churches have a real atmosphere, and one feels in them the spirit and faith of the people who have worshiped there through the years. But on weekdays they seem very empty. They are primarily places for people to meet for a particular kind of service, and when the people are not there they seem like a vacant house that is open only for inspection. Somehow one cannot help having the feeling in a pulpit-centered church that God just meets the people there on Sundays. The rest of the time he is away too, or is shut up in the big Bible on the pulpit, to be let out at eleven o'clock on Sunday mornings when the minister opens the Book to read the lesson.

It is no wonder that traditional Protestantism suffers from Bibliolatry. Not only does our inherited theology contribute to this attitude, but the very architecture of our churches does so as well. In most traditional Protestant churches there is nothing that speaks of God except the Bible, and it is put right in the center of the front of the church so that when the people bow down to worship the only thing they are bowing down before is the Bible. And psychologically the inevitable effect of this is to shut God up within the pages of this Book and divorce him from everything else, which is almost as bad as the Catholic attempt to shut him up in a box.

I think we would all agree that a church is primarily a place in which to worship, and if its architecture is effective in terms of its function, the very structure of the church must be conducive to worship. It must make one feel the presence of God.

But it must do this not by trying to bring God down to the level of men, but by lifting men's thoughts up to God. Actually, of course, God is not in a church any more than he is any place else. He does not dwell in great cathedrals, or in little Gothic chapels, any more than he dwells in Congregational meetinghouses or late nineteenth-century golden oak auditoriums. But somehow one feels his presence more in an old cathedral than in a late nineteenth-century golden oak auditorium; and he seems less confined in a little Gothic chapel than in a Congregational meetinghouse, however lovely and chaste the latter may be.

The worshipful quality of church architecture is, after all, not something to be tested so much by its adaptability to public worship as by its being conducive to private prayer. When a group of people are praying together or singing hymns, or listening to the reading of the Bible, or to a sermon on some text of Scripture, they may very well feel the presence of God even in a storeroom or a warehouse; but under such circumstances what induces this feeling is not the architecture of the place but the service itself, which, if it is effective, so carries them away in thought that they are unmindful of their surroundings. But the worshipful character of the service here is achieved not because of, but in spite of the surroundings. Surely if the atmosphere of the building is so negative that its influence has to be overcome by the service, this furnishes no criterion of excellence in church architecture. But if the very structure of the building in itself, without the aid of hymns and prayers and Scripture lessons, speaks to one of God and makes one want to pray, then it is worshipful in its quality and in its effect upon the mind of the worshiper, and is what a church should be.

My objection to a pulpit-centered church is not only that it tends to shut God in the Bible, but that it also tends to shut the worshiper in the church. It opens no vista for the mind into the larger realm of the spirit. It is a room for speaking and for people to meet together, and its platform and reading-desk pulpit form an effective barrier which stops the mind and shuts it up in a room.

The same is true of a Catholic church without a chancel. God is shut up in a box on the altar, and the front of the church is simply a stage for the periodic enacting of the drama of the Mass. When the drama is being enacted the mind of the worshiper is carried beyond the confines of the church building by the symbolism of the sacrifice to a God who is himself outside the church, just as in a Protestant service it is lifted up by the hymns and prayers and the reading and preaching of the Word. But when the drama is not being enacted, there is only the recollection of it to carry the mind beyond; there is nothing in the architecture except the altar which tends in itself to do this.

It is not the form of the service, then, that determines the worshipful character of the church, but its architecture, and what makes the architecture effective in this regard is primarily a well-designed chancel.

What we Protestants need to see at the outset is that, historically, having a chancel is not un-Protestant and not in itself Episcopal. The leaders of the Protestant Reformation were not establishing a new church;

they were trying to reform the historic Catholic Church. In the places where they succeeded they did not tear down the old Catholic churches and build entirely different ones with platforms and reading desks in place of the old chancels and box pulpits on the side. They left all this as it was and simply moved the altar out from the chancel wall and made it a communion table, as one can see in all the great historic shrines of the Reformation, such as St. Peter's in Geneva, where Calvin preached, and St. Giles' in Edinburgh, where John Knox carried on the Reformation in Scotland, or in a simple parish church like that in Saanen, near Gstaad in Switzerland. And while the later tendency was to build new churches with the pulpit in the center to emphasize the central position of the Bible in Protestant theology, this was done with a great loss in the worshipful character of the church buildings, as the Church of Scotland now recognizes in its regulation that all new churches today are to be built with a chancel.

The advantages of a chancel from the standpoint of worship are twofold. In the first place, a chancel in itself reminds one that this is a place not just for meeting with other people and listening to sermons, but a place primarily for meeting with God; because the chancel is made for the celebration of the Communion and it makes this central in the worship of the church, even though the particular church is one in which the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not celebrated frequently. When one goes into such a church the very architecture says to him, "This is a place where people meet with God in prayer, spiritual communion; bow down, therefore, and pray." By its very structure it creates an atmosphere of worship, and such a church does not seem empty just because no service is going on and it is not at the time filled with people.

But if a chancel is to be most effective in creating this atmosphere of prayer, it must open up a vista for the soul, like a vista for the eye in a painting, or a road running through a forest that invites the traveler to follow it beyond the horizon. And in this connection, strangely enough, a communion table in the middle of the chancel is more effective than a high altar against the back wall; which may be part of the reason why some Catholic cathedrals now have their high altars so that one can see beyond them into the apse of the Lady Chapel, as is the case with the new high altar in St. Patrick's in New York. This may not be due alone to the antiquarian discovery that the first Christian altars were tables; it may also be due to the recognition of the fact that the

mind of the worshiper should not be stopped by any barrier within the church, even a high altar, but should be carried upward and onward to something beyond.

Our experience in the Bronxville Reformed Church is interesting in this connection. It is a simple early English Gothic church, with a well designed chancel, the communion table in the middle of it, and a lovely window above. The window used to be filled with plain colored glass. This made the light soft and pleasant, but it said nothing to the soul of the worshiper. It was a fine church for public worship; but when one went into it on a weekday to pray, there was something lacking. One looked at the cross on the communion table, and as a symbol it said something to one's soul. But because the chancel was well done, one's eyes were inevitably lifted up to the chancel window, and it was nothing but a spot of soft light. Then a few years ago we put in a really fine stained-glass window there. The lower three panels symbolize the Crucifixion, the upper three the rule of Christ the Eternal King. That window has changed the whole character of our church and made it really for the first time a place for meditation and prayer.

A chancel that is well done makes any type of church more worshipful, regardless of its general architecture, and in this respect a Georgian church with a chancel, like St. Paul's in Richmond, is better than a Georgian New England meetinghouse with the pulpit in the center, however simple and beautiful the latter may be. But from the standpoint of its psychological effect there is no doubt but what the best architecture for worship is the Gothic. The types of this are varied; but if they are historically good, they are psychologically effective. And this is no accident. Gothic architecture represents in architecture the deepest yearnings and the loftiest aspirations of the human soul for God. The fear of God and the love of God, the sense of his awful majesty and power in the world, and of his being the Creator and Governor of our lives, were the very core of the intellectual and emotional life of the men who built these churches, and they still inspire the mind of man with these same thoughts and feelings today. In a Gothic church one does not have the feeling that either God or the human soul is shut up within the four walls of that particular structure, but rather that the world is shut out—the noise and bustle and confusion of the transient world of physical things—and that there is opened to one by suggestion the vaster, unseen eternal world of the spirit. The church may be small and modern from the standpoint of the date of

its construction, like the lovely little Gothic chapel at Paul Smith's in the Adirondacks, or it may be a vast place, built long ago, like York Minster or Canterbury, with the long reaches of the nave and the choir beyond; but the worshipful effect is the same.

But if one tries to build a Gothic church without a chancel, the effect is lost. A Gothic church, whatever its size, cannot end in a platform with a big reading desk in the middle of it, or in some big heavy chairs for the ministers to sit in and a choir loft above that, like some modern Methodist and Presbyterian adaptations of the Gothic that have been put up at great expense by wealthy congregations in various parts of the country. In such churches one gets some inspiration from looking at the back of the church through the lofty arches of the nave, but little, if any, from looking at the front of it, because the mind is stopped by the pulpit or the ministers' chairs or the choir loft. Even if there is a proper window above all this, there is nothing that leads the mind up to it. Instead there are all these barriers that have to be jumped over, like so many hurdles, that have no proper place in the structure at all.

But a Protestant church is not simply a place for private prayer and communion services. It is also a place for preaching. What are the merits, if any, of a chancel for preaching?

Here I can only speak from my own experience and feeling, but personally I have come to prefer a regular box pulpit on the side of the chancel to a platform with a great heavy reading desk in the middle of it. I like the feel of it better, perhaps because, on the one hand, it makes one feel less like a lecturer, or a Shakespearian actor, striding about on a big platform, and more in line with the great historic tradition of Christian preaching through the centuries; and, on the other, it keeps one from feeling that he is the center of things and because of that fact speaks inevitably with the voice of God. Preaching from a side pulpit helps one to feel that he and his sermon are part of something more comprehensive and in its entirety more important. It somehow gives one the feeling of being a worshiper even while he is preaching. In a pulpit-centered church there is no logical place to think of God except right behind the minister or over his head, and especially there is no other place for the minister to think of him. But in a church with a chancel, God is not thought of as hovering over the head of the minister; and the preacher does not stand between the people and God, which may in its practical consequences be just as bad as having a priest stand between the people and God. A chancel with a communion table

saves the people from both, and is in perfect accord with the essential theology of Protestantism.

The Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church is one of the greatest churches in America, because of the greatness of the preachers who have occupied its pulpit and the influential congregations they have gathered there to hear them. But if one goes there to worship on Sundays one goes primarily to hear a certain minister, and I cannot imagine anyone going in there on a weekday to meditate and pray who did not have a strong attachment to the place carried over from association with it on Sundays. Just two blocks down the avenue is another church, however, that is very different, St. Thomas'. Personally I always find it hard to pass St. Thomas' without going in for a few minutes to enjoy the rare beauty of the place, and to sit there in the quiet and peace of it to meditate and pray. And like York Minster, or the little chapel at Paul Smith's, St. Thomas' never seems empty. God is not shut in there anywhere; but one feels his presence. He is high above the reredos and on beyond the deep blue of the lovely window, high above the chancel, with its little splotches of red, like fire in the vast reaches of interstellar space; the cares of the world drop away, and one's soul is filled with the sense of the peace and power of God. And when one walks down the steps onto the avenue again, he carries back into the bustling crowd the recollection of the vision of another world of the spirit that gives meaning to all this.

Having a chancel in a church is not an end in itself; it is simply a means to an end. The end is the intelligent and reverent worship of God. A chancel is important just because it tends to make one want to pray, because psychologically it suggests prayer; while a platform with a heavy reading desk in the middle of it simply suggests listening to someone read from a book and speak, who is going to do a lot of walking around while he talks. From a functional standpoint there is no other good reason for the kind of pulpit-centered construction which one finds in most modern Protestant churches. Better put the minister in a box, and leave a place in the center of things for God—a place that is big enough, a place that to the observing mind suggests an entrance into the vastness of the realm of the spirit, which is the realm of God.

Why I Prefer the Pulpit-Centered Church

HARRY MILTON TAYLOR

Protestant church architecture should symbolize the Sacrament of the Word—the unity of written and spoken Word ought not to be broken.

DISCUSSION ABOUT kinds of pulpits hardly belongs to the highest order of seriousness. People have been saved by the Word of God spoken from a Cross, on Mars Hill, from the ambo and altar rail, on the stage of a local theater . . . even on a golf course. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Not even its most ardent defender would asseverate that a central pulpit would *ex opere operato* make a Cadman out of a Clapjingle, nor that Harry Emerson Fosdick failed homiletically by attempting to preach from the divided pulpit at Riverside. Indeed, a census might reveal that the best preaching in America is being done from what a friend of mine calls "off-side pulpits." Such a discovery would prove nothing, for it would be rather difficult to determine how much this finest quality is obligated to the Holy Spirit, how much to Halford Luccock, how much to the theological illiteracy of congregations, and how much to the position of the preacher's desk. Still more difficult would it be to establish the comparative merits of quartered oak and mahogany. Not even Carlyle could persuade us that furniture makes the preacher.

There might, however, be truth in the converse. While preaching was reduced to secondary importance, from the fifth to the fifteenth centuries, interest in the Mass and the color of choir robes flourished, but there was no development in pulpit architecture. When the Reformation restored interest in preaching, pulpit architecture developed rapidly. While pulpits do not make preachers (as congregations often do), preachers make pulpits. A succession of great preachers does not end its dynasty on an orange crate.

Thus we may reason, with some justification, that the kind of preaching has bearing on the kind of pulpit, with Baptists and Presbyterians and Methodists (in that ascending order!) building central pulpits, and

Episcopalians building peripheral pulpits. I remember hearing Dean Inge at St. Paul's—or rather, *not* hearing him. I was there all right, but was forced to conclude that it might have been more conducive to worship if he had been even further off on the horizon. We could have given ourselves undividedly to the beauty of the altar and the inspiration of the gloomy Gothic, without straining to hear the profound whispering of the gloomy Dean as he tried valiantly to make his Christian Platonism triumph over the unreal but very loud noises of the settling Cathedral.

Art symbolizes idea. In any tradition, the prevailing attitude toward the place and function of preaching tends to be reflected in the location of the pulpit. The Catholic insistence on the centrality of the Body and Blood of Christ was the primary reason for dividing the pulpit. The pulpit and the lectern were given subordinate and peripheral roles, signifying clearly that the Scripture and the sermon are less important than the Sacrament. The counterinsistence of the Reformers upon the centrality of the Word, the Bible as Light and Guide, was responsible for the placement of the pulpit in front center.

The Reformation pulpit brought with it some architectural infelicities. Many-toothed organ pipes grin overbearingly at the preacher's back, while behind that same back assorted faces of gospel singers busy themselves with many things. Stafford, in his *Christian Symbolism in the Evangelical Churches*, seems to know of nothing beautiful that is not divided chancel. Yet I am not sure that ugly organs and the rest are necessary adjuncts to the central pulpit, any more than scrawling dedicatory names at the bottom of church windows is inseparable from Protestantism. With the curse of Puritanism still on us, we have had a genius for ugliness that screams at us from the landscape everywhere. Though there are happy exceptions, it has generally been true that the "lower" the church, the less lovely the house it has dedicated to God. Nevertheless, one can hardly blame the fact on the central pulpit. I have seen swank sanctuaries with divided pulpits that were no less hideous than the barns-with-desk in which some Protestant congregations are stored. I shiver when I think of one costly "home for worship" where the Stygian blue of the windows and the damp of the stone walls and the dark of the premeditated mystery conspire to produce the effect of an ice cave in the Rhone glacier; but I cannot honestly blame the embalming depressiveness of the architecture on the divided chancel there.

Surely the motif of the Incarnate Word is not artistically inferior to that of the Lamb slain on a Cross. Pulpit-centered churches can be

beautiful. One thinks immediately of two here in the East, Old First in Newark, and Fifth Avenue Presbyterian in New York City. Then, down New England way, there is the famous Old South Church of Boston, and there is also the chaste old colonial designed by Sir Christopher Wren for the Unitarians in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. Among our British churches, there is the Wellington Presbyterian in Glasgow. And who, seeing it before it suffered the misfortunes of war, will not mourn the destruction of the "great white pulpit" of City Temple in London?

So far as I as a preacher am concerned, if I may have a simple, chastely designed sanctuary with a central pulpit and the pews closely gathered round like attentive children about a storyteller's knees, I want none of your cold and distant Gothic, where the proclaimer of the Word is forced to peer into a receding chasm to locate the forms (never the faces) of his flock and, in the hope of being heard, to cup his hands about his mouth like a Swiss yodler.

But such considerations are trifles. The only serious issue—and this is very serious—is psychological. The divided pulpit says dramatically to the worshiper, "On your right (lectern) you have sacred Scripture, God's revelation of truth; you may depend on it unquestioningly. On your left (pulpit) you have mere human interpretation, fallible embroidering, one man's opinion." The Anglican disdain of preaching grows out of the conviction that its importance is secondary. One of my friends quotes an Episcopalian rector to the effect that his church honors the reading of the Word and makes ample provision for the administration of the Sacraments, with the lectern on one side for the inspired Bible and the pulpit on the other for the uninspired preacher. God forgive us, we are uninspired, and uninspiring, often enough. But the symbolism of the house of God ought not to preserve and reflect our shame.

No one of us would like to deny that the Anglican tradition has produced great preachers; but one cannot escape the conviction that such are exceptions, and that they become exceptions only by surmounting a certain belittling of the pulpit characteristic of their neo-ultramontane view.

The central pulpit symbolizes the genuinely Protestant conviction that the preaching of the Word is of primary concern in religious worship. We do not believe that the spoken Word is separate from the written Word. We believe that one Spirit works through Scripture and prophet to produce a single effect upon the worshiper. We believe that the validity of revelation does not reside in a Book but in a vital

relationship between the living Father and the living child; and that therefore truth is, in its utterance and in its reception as well as in all that is intermediary and instrumental, something dynamic. When our preaching is valid, our words speak the Word. Preaching is a re-enactment, a perpetuation of the truth of Holy Writ. Therefore, to separate Scripture and sermon architecturally is to suggest a falsehood, to symbolize an untruth. The central pulpit says: "Here is God's Word for your instruction and salvation. God now speaks to you, through his servants of old, and through this servant present before you. The devices of the Spirit are many and varied; but God is one and his Word is one. Here is *his* truth, contemporary, specific for you."

I would not like to believe that homiletical inadequacy is responsible for the recent increase of emphasis on "worship" and a corollary dividing of pulpits. I fear the reason lies deeper. Having succumbed to the superstitions of secularistic science, we have lost the assurance that Jesus Christ was the perfect revelation of all the truth that is essential for human welfare; and we have been shamed into denying that we have been called of God to continue the proclamation of that truth; and we cannot quite believe that the risen Christ through the Holy Spirit continues the miracle of the incarnation of the Word in and through his ministers of the Word; and we thus have surrendered our high office as continuers of the Revelation which man and men need for their salvation and highest joy.

Preaching is as necessary to Scripture as hand is to wrist. Without preaching, the biblical means of salvation is seriously impaired. Scholarship and study and consecration and inspiration and creative speech combined in a single art are vital to the perpetuation of the process of the Word being made flesh and dwelling among men.

If I am truly a prophet, I am not an idealistic commentator on current events, I am not a reciter of moral homilies, I am more than a psychological bromide, I am even more than an interpreter of the Bible. I am intrinsically part of the Word of God; it becomes mine as I become its mouthpiece, for through it to and through me God speaks to his people. I am a high priest of the sacrament of the Word. And I tend to create an erroneous impression, to foster a schizophrenic view of the mediation of divine guidance, if I walk away from the Book over to my notes the act is psychologically incongruous, misleading, harmful.

Perhaps in this psychological connection something should be said

in favor of the lectern as a place from which announcements could be read, thus to save the pulpit from desecration. But then, if we aim for perfection—why not dispense with announcements? Do not mistake this concession. I abominate pulpit announcements; yet I suspect that any preacher could do a better sales job in a central pulpit than at a lectern. It is exactly this that I dread in the making of announcements: they not only interrupt the service of worship, but, when made from the pulpit, they tend to give a false sanctity to the secular. The embarrassment is almost like that of the nearsighted bishop who baptized the penguins in Anatole France's famous satire. A commanding voice in a central pulpit can make a notice about a cabbage dinner something "out of this world." Alas!

"Cur Deus Homo?"—A Theological Reprint

Saint Anselm (1033?-1109)

Anselm, born in Piedmont, became prior, then abbot, of the abbey of Bec, which he made the first seat of learning in Europe. Succeeding Lanfranc as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1093, he was involved for years in a conflict between King and Pope. His theological starting-point was *credo ut intelligam*. In the *Proslogion* he first presented the ontological argument for the existence of God, and in *Cur Deus Homo?* attempted to demonstrate the rational necessity of Incarnation and Atonement. He has been called "the greatest thinker that ever adorned the throne of Canterbury."

The edition here used is that of Dutton & Co., 1889. Selections are from Bk. I, chaps. iii-x. Dialogue form is used, indicated here by "B" for the questioner and "A" for Anselm.

B. "Unbelievers, mocking at our simplicity, reproach us with doing God wrong and putting him to shame when we assert that he descended into the womb of a virgin, was born of a woman, grew, was nourished with milk and the ordinary food of man, and . . . that he suffered weariness, hunger, thirst, scourging, and death with thieves on the cross."

A. "We do God no wrong nor put him to shame, but giving thanks with all our hearts we praise him and proclaim the ineffable heights of his mercy. . . . For it was needful that as by the disobedience of man death had come upon the human race, so by the obedience of man should life be given back. . . . There are also many other things, which being carefully studied, show the ineffable beauty of the redemption in this way procured for us. . . ."

B. "If this deliverance were said to be effected by anyone else rather than by God himself (whether by angel or by man), in what way matters not, the human intellect would accept the fact much more readily. For God might have made some one man without sin, not of the sinful mass of humanity, nor from any one man, but as he made Adam: by such a one it would appear that this same work might have been accomplished."

A. "Don't you understand that whatever other person should save man from death eternal, to him would man rightly belong? If that were so, he could in no wise be restored to that place of dignity which he would have filled had he not sinned; since he who was to have been the servant of God only, and equal in all things to the good angels, would be the slave of one who was not God and to whom the angels owed no service. . . ."

B. ". . . . How could it be proved just or reasonable that God should so treat that Man whom the Father called his 'beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased,' and who called himself the Son, or permit him to be treated thus? What man would not be judged worthy of condemnation if he were to condemn the innocent in order to let the guilty go free? if he could not save sinners otherwise than by condemning the just, where is his omnipotence? and if he could, but would not, how do we defend his wisdom and justice?"

A. "God the Father did not treat that Man as you seem to think, nor did he deliver up the innocent to die for the wicked. For he did not either compel him to die, nor permit him to be slain, unwilling; but that one himself bore his death by his own free will that he might save mankind."

B. "Even if he did not compel him to it against his will, since he consented to what the Father willed; yet in some way he seems to have coerced him by commands. For it is said that Christ 'humbled himself, and became obedient to the Father unto death, even the death of the cross' 'he learned obedience by the things which he suffered' 'I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.' In all these passages Christ appears to have suffered death more under the compulsion of obedience than by the spontaneous disposition of his own will."

A. "It seems to me that you do not rightly distinguish between that which he did under the constraint of obedience, and that which, being inflicted on him because he adhered to his obedience, he bore without any compulsion to obey."

B. "I need that you should explain this more fully."

A. "Why did the Jews persecute him unto death?"

B. "For nothing else than that in life and speech he held unswervingly to truth and righteousness."

A. "I think it was that, for God demands this from every rational creature, and this it owes by obedience. . . ."

B. "It is true; and I now see what that was which, having brought on himself by persisting in obedience, he likewise bore. For death was inflicted on him because he stood firm in his obedience, and he endured it; but how it is that obedience did not require *this*, I do not understand."

A. "Had man never sinned, ought he to suffer death, or should God require this of him?"

B. "It is clear that if man had not sinned, it had not behoved God to require him to die."

A. "Therefore, God did not compel Christ, in whom was no sin, to die; but Christ of his own will bore death, not from any obligation to give up his life. . . . But it may be said that the Father commanded him to die, since he did lay on him a command to do that whereby he incurred death. Therefore, as the Father gave him commandment, even so he did, and the cup which he gave him, he drank, and he was made obedient to his Father even unto death. . . .

"Where he says, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not what I will but as thou wilt,' he means by his 'own will' the natural desire for preservation, whereby his human flesh shrank from the pain of death. But he says 'the will of the Father,' not for that the Father would prefer the death to the life of the Son; but because the Father willed not the human race to be restored, unless man should do something as great as was that death . . . as though he could say: 'Since thou wilt not that the reconciliation of the world be otherwise accomplished, in this may I say that thou wilt my death: thy will be done, that is, let my death take place, that the world may be reconciled to thee. . . .'

"So the Father, in this sense, willed the death of the Son, in that he would have the world saved no otherwise than by man doing this so great deed, as I said before. And the salvation of man was so precious to the Son who willed it, that since in no other way he could effect it, it behoved him to die; wherefore he did as his Father gave him commandment, and the cup which his Father gave him, he drank, being obedient even unto death."

A Review of the Quarter's Fiction

JOHN C. SCHROEDER

THIS REVIEWER is constantly searching for novels with religious relevance. They are exceedingly rare. Many novels vividly reflect the morals, the manners, the unconscious ideals of a period. But only the occasional story has a theme directly concerned with religion. *The Eagle and the Cross* is such a tale. Marcius, an Irish officer of the Roman Legions, is deputed to return to Rome from Palestine to tell Tiberius Caesar about the events in connection with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. The author is concerned to portray Tiberius as a liberal, thoughtful man who takes his responsibilities as head of the state seriously. Marcius, a fine, gentle young man, first visits the centurion Cornelius whose conversion is described in Acts 10 and who is identified with the unnamed centurion in Luke 7 who was "a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." Marcius, a witness of the events in Jerusalem, is concerned to persuade Tiberius that if the Empire, a social and political unit, will hospitably receive his news, it will gain the more significant unity of a religious community. He goes to Rome where he meets Seneca, whose flexible mentality makes him seem sympathetic to Marcius' news but whose cynicism makes him afraid to profess his convictions and whose timeserving political ambition destroys his integrity. The author labors to give all this contemporary relevance by describing the civilization of the time as though it were as comfortable as our own. Sleeping cars, hotel rooms with bath, porters, easy communication, fashionable dinner parties make ancient Rome seem like modern New York. While undoubtedly there is some correspondence, the point is forced and anachronisms appear. An even more serious flaw is that Marcius thinks like a Thomist. It is very hard for me to believe that the Christianity of that period possessed any of the lineaments which are attributed to it. While the book is sincere and pious, it is unconvincing. The Book of Acts is much more persuasive and much more interesting.

The Other Room is a fine, moving story. The characterizations are real and the style is simple and pure. Nina Latham, born in Virginia,

is an intelligent and idealistic young woman who wants to teach. She is offered a job in a school in New Orleans and arrives at the railroad station, to be met by Professor Warwick, a delightful, handsome young man. But when she arrives at the school her heart sinks. The buildings are shabby, the students are Negroes, and the faculty is interracial. Warwick is a Negro. Her impulse is to run away. But she stays to find that this community consists of people, people like those she has always known. She discovers "the Other Room" of segregation, "a room in a house in which I had always lived but which I would have been forbidden to enter had I ever wanted to. In this other room, life went on as it did in the rest of the house but the people had no curiosity about that room, took no notice of it unless one of the roomers stepped over the threshold to be laughed at or punished and pushed back."

She learns to feel the animosity of the whites in the surrounding community as well as the longings of her students. *The Other Room*, one of the succession of stories about interracial dilemmas, is an intelligent, compelling book. Unlike so many of the others, it is less a tract than a narrative of the experience of a sensitive, fine person.

The Steeper Cliff tells of a man's fear of fear and his struggle against it. Lieut. Andrew Cooper is forever asking himself, "What would I be ready to endure for the sake of my convictions?" As a child, he seemed to show himself a physical coward. When the war broke, he enlisted in the infantry in order to prove himself to himself. But since he has been a newspaperman, he afterwards finds himself in the A.M.G. in Munich. He has to discover editors for newspapers in the surrounding cities. He interviews many who have capitulated to the Nazis in order to keep their jobs.

In his search, he hears of an Adam Lorenz who was tortured in Dachau for an anti-Hitler editorial. The novel is the narrative of his search for the lost Lorenz. Each additional snatch of information tends to erect his own edifice of courage.

He finds Adam's father who reports an incident in 1931 when Lorenz, a small, insignificant young man, tried to stop the Brown Shirts from bullying an old Jew. "He smiled through his bandages and said, 'Fear was crawling all over me like lice.' 'Then why did you do it?' 'Just for that reason.' . . . I said, 'Adam, you could have been killed.' He smiled and answered, 'Of course.' 'You didn't have a chance in the world of winning.' 'I know.'"

Cooper also meets Brigitte, Adam's wife, through whose sympathetic understanding of his problem the young lieutenant becomes identified in spirit with the missing man.

The villain of the piece is Major Groll, an ambitious, stupid, unscrupulous militarist.

The novel is a picture of what is going on in Germany today; but much more important, it is an attempt to portray the hurt and cost of moral courage.

Two of the leading best sellers are historical romances. *The Money-man* is about France during the reign of Charles VII. Jeanne d'Arc had been put to death and the English occupation of much of the realm had the court and the nobility so frightened that they were impotent to challenge the invaders. Jacques Coeur was the king's moneyman. He was a merchant with a chain of department stores, who was convinced that the newly invented cannon would drive out the arrogant English. But he was opposed by the decadent chivalry of the period. The pageantry of medieval splendor had become dowdy but no one was able to perceive it. Against this background Costain weaves a romantic plot. He savors the flavor of the age, although it is interesting to see that he does not include religion among his tasty ingredients. He does show that by this time the age of chivalry was moribund. Jacques de Lalain, the champion of the period, was a vain bully whose mind was that of a cheap professional prize fighter in our own time. When finally, as the result of Coeur's intrigue and money, the French attacked Rouen, their cannon smashed the age of chivalry as well as the walls of the town.

This is a fine, exciting romance. While it is full of picturesque detail and while historically its leading figures are well portrayed, actually it is a picture of the times distorted by the viewpoint of our own day. Coeur thinks like a twentieth-century merchant who lives four centuries before his time.

Prince of Foxes is a romance of Renaissance Italy, written in the best cloak-and-dagger tradition. Andrea Orsini, born a peasant, has been able, by faking his genealogy, to become one of Cesare Borgia's most colorful captains. Like many men of the Renaissance, he is extraordinarily versatile. He paints like Mantegna, writes charming verses, understands the use of metals in ordnance, and is a consummate military strategist.

Borgia sends him on a diplomatic mission to arrange the marriage of the lovely but wicked Lucrezia to Alfonzo, son of the Duke D'Este

at Ferrara. There he encounters the enmity of the sly, unprincipled Cardinal Ippolito. Andrea is eventually reformed and turns his back upon his former master.

Here as in *The Moneyman* is a wealth of detail. All the colors, smells, and sounds of the period which discovered how sensuously interesting human life can be, are spread in lush profusion. Again, in this story, religion seems to have no place in life.

These historical romances are good tales. This summer I have been reading some of the classics of the same school with my daughter and I'm bound to say that they are no better than their modern counterparts.

I ran into a short novel called *The Dark Philosophers* and found it an exceedingly fine story. It is a proletarian novel with a slightly Marxist tinge; but the ideology is flavored with humor, which perhaps is a contradiction in terms. The plot is slight—the story of a Welsh preacher who starts by fighting for the miners and ends by becoming the tool of the owners. But the style is fresh and human and the book is full of delicate and compassionate insights, which the author expresses in direct, sturdy prose.

The publishers advertise that millions of people are reading *The Story of Mrs. Murphy*. Anyone who picks it up will probably finish it and everyone who does will be shocked. It is the case history of a dipsomaniac and it is followed with photographic realism. Jimmy Murphy is the alcoholic. When he is sober, he is Dr. Jekyll, a gay, debonaire, generous Irish lad, who is like a convert in his fastidious love of cleanliness. When he is drunk, he is a horrible beast. The descriptions of his behavior during one of his binges are disgusting and degrading. He has a brother who is a priest, a brother who is a policeman, and sisters who are typical Irish girls. His mother is a sentimental, lachrymose woman, devoted to her religion.

It would have been a much better book had it suggested some reasons for Jimmy's condition. The descriptions of his conduct are terrifyingly exact. But whether he began drinking because of his mother's sentimental attachment or because an Oedipus complex made him hate his father is not revealed. He resists any attempts at a cure. The story reveals the depths of depravity to which human nature sinks when victimized by alcohol, but it leaves the reader helpless in the matter of understanding either its cause or its cure.

The Enchanted is a story about children. Seven Spanish refugee

children are in France as it is about to fall to the Germans. Their adventures before they escape on a boat are amusingly pathetic and reveal the great abyss which exists between the mind of a child and that of an adult. From that point on, the meaning is obscure. The reader suspects that it is an allegory of humanity's search for the Kingdom of God. Each of the children is a type of human nature, but their odyssey becomes confused in symbolism difficult to identify. There are chapters in the first part of the book which are charming, when the children, so direct and so honest, prove unintelligible to the perverse, twisted sophistications of adulthood.

The Eagle and the Cross. By PRINCE HUBERTUS ZU LOEWENSTEIN. New York: The Macmillan Company. pp. 280. \$2.75.

The Other Room. By WORTH TUTTLE HEDDEN. New York: Crown Publishers. pp. 274. \$2.75.

The Steeper Cliff. By DAVID DAVIDSON. New York: Random House. pp. 340. \$3.00.

The Moneyman. By THOMAS B. COSTAIN. New York: Doubleday and Company. pp. 434. \$3.00.

Prince of Foxes. By SAMUEL SHELLABARGER. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. pp. 433. \$3.00.

The Dark Philosophers. By GWYN THOMAS. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. pp. 178. \$2.00.

The Story of Mrs. Murphy. By NATALIE ANDERSON. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. pp. 445. \$3.00.

The Enchanted. By MARTIN FLAVIN. New York: Harper and Brothers. pp. 289. \$3.00.

Book Reviews

World Christianity—Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. By HENRY P. VAN DUSEN. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947. pp. 302. \$2.50.

If enthusiasm for a cause, deep conviction of the importance of a goal, thorough study and wide contacts with the efforts to promote a movement qualify one to define the terms, report the progress and argue the value of the ecumenical movement in current history, Dr. Van Dusen is eminently fitted to tell the story.

The timeliness of such a volume is perfect in view of the near approach of the formal launching of the World Council of Churches in 1948. Other studies are valuable, some of them essential to full understanding, but this one cannot be omitted.

Readers would know without the author's statement that "this book gathers into summary various studies carried on over a number of years" by him. There is here not a little re-use of his published studies. Not only does one read again what he has read in previous volumes, but finds not a little duplication of the same material in different parts of this volume, excusable because it fits into the discussion of different aspects of the developing theme.

It is well also that Van Dusen fully acknowledges and documents his extensive use of Latourette's monumental studies and clear analyses of Christian history. One could not make the interrelation of missionary expansion and ecumenical growth a major factor in his discussion without liberal use of the ideas as well as of the materials of our supreme historian of Christian expansion.

One would expect Van Dusen to begin with a chapter on "The Rediscovery of the Church." A clearer definition of the meaning of the Church and more consistent adherence to some one concept in the use of the term would help many a reader, and might have helped the author now and then. Just there is one of the chief faults of nearly all writers on Christian Unity and church union—the fault of a very widely and vaguely "undistributed middle."

Through two sections of two chapters each, Dr. Van Dusen traces the expanding Christian missions of the modern era and the growth of Christian unity to the point of "World Mission" and "World Community." This prepares the way for pressing "World Christianity Tomorrow," to be discussed in three comprehending topics: "The Imperative to Unity," "The Authority of Christian Faith," "The Issues of Christian Unity." It is under this last title that we come to the original contribution of the book. The issues that divide denominations are traced and analyzed patiently until exactly located. "The three most intractable issues" are found in (a) baptism, (b) the Eucharist, (c) the ministry. (Why does he use small b and m and capital E?) He proposes to resolve differences as to each of these by "*the principle of comprehension*." In each case he will apply three tests: original meaning and practice, historic development, practical value. Affirming that it is agreed on all hands (sic!) that the New Testament affords basis for episcopacy, presbyterianism, and congregationalism, it is proposed to combine the different practices in one united practice. In the case of baptism, for example, Dr. Van Dusen proposes the baptism (whatever form) for all infants, but to recognize them as actually Christians only when they personally accept Christian experience in faith, whereupon they will receive a second "baptism,"

this time (apparently) in the immersion symbol. Try to figure out the acceptance of that formula by Episcopalians and by Baptists! Along similar lines he proposes to settle differences as to "the ministry" and related matters. It is good to get such concrete proposals.

The final chapter insists powerfully on the need for revival as a condition of unity. A long list, more than twenty pages, literally hundreds of instances of "Christian co-operation and union, 1795-1946," is given as an appendix. Most of these properly have no significance for the ecumenical effort. Yet it is interesting to have the full list for study. Other appendices chart "The Ecumenical Tree," list "The Member Churches" of the World Council, and outline the course of "Church Union in South India."

Dr. Van Dusen cannot quite make up his mind concerning the desirability of one single Church incorporating all the churches. He is quite clear that spiritual unity and complete co-operation and federation are desirable, with full communion and mutual recognition of "ministries." For him any claim to spiritual unity by any group that retains a belief or practice that holds the group back from union is deceptive, and either consciously or unconsciously "insincere."

Here is the textbook for most of us who wish to see the total movement as of today.

W. O. CARVER

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

Reformation Old and New: A Tribute to Karl Barth. Edited by F. W. CAMFIELD. London and Redhill: The Lutterworth Press, 1947. pp. 220. 18s. net.

A number of distinguished scholars unite to produce this tribute to Karl Barth on his sixtieth birthday. Dr. Camfield, the vicar of Churchstow with Kingsbridge, Devon, writes the first part of the volume in which he treats the development of Karl Barth's theology to its present stage, Barth's theology as a "spiritual movement," and Barth's doctrine of God.

Part Two consists of a series of essays by such prominent admirers of Barth as John McConnachie (Dundee), T. F. Torrance (Alyth), G. Hendry (Bridge of Allan), H. F. Lovell Cocks (Western College, Bristol), D. T. Jenkins (*Christian News Letter*), H. A. Hodges (University of Reading), and the Chaplain and Tutor of Mansfield College, W. A. Whitehouse (Oxford). The titles of these chapters are: Reformation Issues Today, The Word of God and the Nature of Man, The Rediscovery of the Bible, The Faith That Saves, The Church Catholic and Reformed, The Crisis in Philosophy, and The State and Divine Law. The last two pages of the book provide us with a list of the principle works of Barth in English and German.

The appearance of this book is an indication that Barth's theological thinking has made a considerable impression upon British church leadership. In these essays one does not find so much a reproduction of what Barth has written, as an explanation and interpretation of his position in terms of the present situation. Barth's influence has grown and spread tremendously since the volume appeared in tribute to him upon his fiftieth birthday. We are fortunate to have such competent authorities give the English-reading public this statement about the progress of Barth's theological pilgrimage during the past war decade during which he encountered the evil of National Socialism.

These writers stress the centrality of the Word of God in the theology of Karl Barth; and they feel quite profoundly that what the church needs now is a restoration of the authority of that Word in its own life. Barth's supreme desire to restore dogmatics to its rightful place in the church is carefully and clearly explained, as is the struggle through which he went to find the authoritative Christian foundations for his entire system and set of theological works, half of which have now appeared in print. Barth is no longer the prophet; he has now become the theologian.

Dr. Camfield provides the reader with an excellent treatment of Barth's doctrine of God, the reality of God (which is God's being-in-action); the nature of revelation which is determined by the biblical Word whose substance is the only subject matter of Christian theology; the knowledge of God which comes alone through faith; the metaphysical and moral attributes of God (which Barth does not separate), of which love and freedom express "the whole essence and reality of God." Barth's conception of election is "a substantive part of the doctrine of God." But since our knowledge of God is found in Jesus Christ, election must be centered in grace. Thus, Barth parts with Calvin, whose doctrine seemed to be divorced from redemption through the grace of Jesus Christ. Barth's doctrine of election stresses grace, as well as the freedom, the mystery, and the righteousness of the electing will of God. Ethics and dogmatics belong to the doctrine of God. According to Barth, "true ethic is a theological ethic"; and ethics is directly related to the election of man in the grace of Jesus Christ.

Further, there can be no thought of combining the natural law with the Commandment of God in Barth's thinking, although he would not battle against natural law as such. Camfield suggests that those who wish to attack Barth in this area had better understand the whole context of his thinking regarding the meaning of the divine Commandment and the obligation of those who are the elect of grace. Barth feels that it is not the Christian's business to worry about law outside the realm of grace, but that he must let his light shine into the darkness of a relative morality, a light which has been kindled at the altar of grace. What the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the Commandment mean to Barth in detail cannot be expanded here.

The second part of the book deals with the contemporary implications of Barth's theology for present-day Protestantism. McConnachie writes movingly about the great theological, ecclesiastical, and ethical issues which Protestantism faces today and shows how Barth's thought is a true restoration of the spirit and content of evangelicalism. Torrance indicates how relevant Barth's theology is to the knowledge, nature, and remaking of man, and shows how the perverted *imago dei* is restored through the judgment and mercy that are in Jesus Christ, the Word in and through whom man was (and is) created. And in succeeding chapters, equally competent writers expand upon the relation of the Word of God to the words of the Bible, upon the nature of saving faith (repudiating existentialism, a certain Christless ideational I-Thou relationship, and an intellectual assent to a creed), upon the true nature of the Church Catholic from the Reformed point of view, upon the crisis in the relation of philosophy to theology, and upon the relation of the state to the divine law.

We are deeply indebted to these authorities, and particularly to the editor, for this excellent up-to-date treatment of Barth's theological work. No doubt, Barth is increasingly coming to the fore in contemporary interest. Few have seen, much

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less read, his massive four volumes of *Dogmatics* (really two volumes in four books), so as to know the monumental and profound work which he is now doing. It is unfortunate that only the first volume of his *Dogmatics* is in English translation. Students a hundred years from now will be still discussing what he is now writing. There are differences of opinion, to be sure, about Barth; but there is a growing consensus of opinion to the effect that Barth is our greatest living contemporary theologian. If there is one thing he has to teach us today, it is this: The only reason for the church's existence is the Word of God, and it is the church's task to work at and serve diligently and reverently this real subject matter of its faith. Theology is an essential discipline for every Christian in every age. Today, it is essential that Christians work at the one reality that gave Christianity birth, which renews it from time to time, and which is God-in-action in his Word, namely, Jesus Christ. There can be no doubt that the Word of God is our ecumenical unity, and that the Word of God, instead of being a confining anachronism, is the salvation of the world.

E. G. HOMRIGHAUSEN

Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey.

As They Liked It; an Essay on Shakespeare and Morality. By ALFRED HARBAGE. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. pp. xiii-238. \$2.75.

Here at long last a note is sounded in Shakespearean criticism that has long been mute. With respect to Shakespeare's concern with morals we have heard nought for these many years but a confident and often contemptuous chorus of denials. The great man, so the critics assured us, cared for none of these things. What indeed has Art, Shakespeare's or another's, to do with right and wrong? That is precisely the question that is answered by Professor Harbage in this very remarkable book, against which only one complaint can justly be made, that it is too short. As it stands it is bound to win and hold its place as one of that little handful of important books about Shakespeare that must constantly be reckoned with.

The meaning of the title is really an encouraging revision upward of the lamentable old slogan about giving the people what they want. In this writer's opinion Shakespeare did just that; and the proceeding was altogether honest and intelligent and high-minded, since Shakespeare pinned his faith on the normal character of his audience, believing with justifiable confidence that nearly all these people who came from every point of the compass to see and hear his plays found the most absorbing interest in life, real life or life in plays, definitely rooted in the ancient questions of morals, the sharp difference between the good and the bad. This was then as it is now the sure subject matter of all talk, from sermons to neighborly gossip. Shakespeare knew it and we need have no doubt that the elemental moralities of his people on the stage and in front of it were his own also. Shakespeare voices the common morality, that power to discriminate between good and evil the possession of which is really identical with that wholesome condition of mind which we call sanity. That Shakespearean "road leading nowhere" is indeed, as Dr. Harbage says, the road that leads home, to "the fundamental convictions of men." Shakespeare is the completely sane man with an easy appreciation of the sanity of his fellows. Their moral home

is his own. His dramatic way is to keep this solid assumption well in sight. Then remembering, as his massive eighteenth-century commentator Dr. Johnson said, that men much oftener need to be reminded than to be informed, he goes on with his magical presentation and arrangement of the obvious.

How refreshing it is to find a modern writer on Shakespeare saying:

"Relevantly or not, in season and out, moral gleams play over the surface and under the surface of Shakespeare's words. Except in a few scenes of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, there are not thirty consecutive lines in Shakespeare that do not levy upon the vocabulary of ethics, or relate in some way to standards of conduct, to choices between right and wrong.

"What distinguishes the action of drama from acrobatic display is its consequential nature, and to recognize that a dramatist deals with such action is to recognize that he deals with morality. The greater dramatist will do so more abundantly than the lesser.

"That our response to Shakespeare's characters is moral is demonstrated in the way we take sides. . . . Our conception of character in the drama is largely a matter of moral partisanship.

"These plays are not *ironical* except in the sense that all art is ironical in seeming to be the thing it is not. They do not belittle or mock life or our moral values; instead they are immensely cognizant of the importance of both."

The most delightful of all these excellent chapters is the one entitled "The Safe Majority." Here the author classifies the characters of the plays according to their moral quality. To make such a census, he says, "requires a suspension of the sense of humor." Maybe so. But the chapter itself must infallibly make its surest appeal to those levelheaded readers whose sense of humor is very much alive. What is here set forth is so abundantly right and sound, without being at all solemn. So far as the present reader is concerned, many a smile was enjoyed before reaching the end of the gorgeous chapter, so perfectly rational and so perfectly new. Whoever thought of making such a calculation as this in a book on Shakespeare! Yet it should have occurred to some critic long ago. For the effect of this careful application of arithmetic is to show the one thing that should be recognized once for all, that Shakespeare's is a wholesomely moral mind cheerfully assuming a kindred wholesomeness to be a dependable quality of mankind in general. The world is full of evil, to be sure, but after all it would seem that it is God's world and not the Devil's.

There are inevitably passages which are controversial. As the author himself says, when he does enter the realm of controversy he does so "to plead for the authority of Shakespearean criticism as a whole, against that present-day portion of it that would nullify all the rest." Having such an aim as this, it is altogether right that the author should be as he is a very model of good behavior in debate, easy and good-humored and courteous even while delivering his most telling blows. His learning is so sound and his reading so wide that he seems while he writes to have at his fingers' ends everything of importance in the history of Shakespeare criticism. We may hope with some confidence that as future criticism is produced and the arguments continue (as they are sure to!) many a writer will be saved from uttering some proud absurdity by recalling in the nick of time something he once read within the covers of this priceless volume.

J. V. MOLDENHAWER

Minister of the First Presbyterian Church, New York City.

Render Unto the People. By UMPHREY LEE. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947. pp. 164. \$1.50.

There are no more important problems of our time than those pertaining to the relations between religion and the state. President Lee has given to the church a readable and thought-provoking study of this whole area. In so doing he has rendered several valuable services.

First, he has made many of the complex problems clear. One of the greatest dangers in the present situation is that leaders of the churches may see only a few of the current evils and rush headlong into obvious solutions, blissfully unaware that they are making other and graver evils more acute than ever. The author provides many useful warnings against such oversimplification.

Moreover, this little book is written in such an easy and engaging style that it will be read with pleasure by many who have shied away from more pretentious works. The author, however, has read very widely and the serious student will thank him for the comprehensive array of references.

On the other hand, the reader who expects to find the way pointed to solutions of the major problems will be disappointed.

After surveying the various proposals for teaching religion to our children, and noting the urgent need that this work be greatly improved, the author concludes that "to date there has been found no substitute for Christian men and women who live like Christians before little children" (p. 90). Similarly, after exploring the need and the proposed methods of teaching religion in higher education, he concludes that to improve such teaching we must have better teachers and hence we should "turn honestly to the task of creating Christian scholars" (p. 114). How? The original question has still been left unanswered.

Again, he deals shrewdly with the pitfalls awaiting the zealous but unwary ministers who carry the banners of the church into battles of economic classes and political parties. What is needed, he rightly insists, is more lay participation in formulating the mind of the church on current issues. He adds hopefully, "I think it not impossible for us to extend the discussion among our own people of the problems of our time in the light of the gospel" (p. 136). Excellent. But he opposes "bigger and better conferences"; he is "allergic to forums and the usual discussion group" (p. 136). How, then, the more extended discussion?

The spirit of the book is conservative. The author defends the rights of the prophets and praises some who lived long ago. But he insists that the legitimate contemporary prophets are not the "divisive forces stirring up revolution against the established paths" (p. 156). He praises George Fox for prophetically speaking "against judges and governors and magistrates" (p. 154) and he glories in the great Quaker's violation of unjust laws in his time. But in the present he decries the fact that "even good people, eager to secure justice, are willing to attack the law and the courts" (p. 160), and he urges that the churches be "the first to bid men to live by the laws they have until they get better ones" (p. 160).

Are there no circumstances under which the church ought to oppose the state? Dr. Lee would reply affirmatively (p. 119). But what circumstances? By what principles will the Christian recognize them? No attempt is made to find the answer.

L. HAROLD DEWOLF

Boston University School of Theology, Boston, Massachusetts.

Approaches to Group Understanding. Sixth Symposium. Edited by LYMAN BRYSON, LOUIS FINKELSTEIN, and R. M. MACIVER. New York: The Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion in their Relation to the Democratic Way of Life, Inc., 1947. Distributed by Harper & Brothers, New York and London. pp. xxv-858. \$5.00.

This symposium consists of 67 papers, with critical comments and replies in footnotes, written for the 1945 meeting of the conference. There is a usable index. The problem set for the participants is what bridges are available for understanding and co-operation between cultural groups and how better bridges can be built. The diversities of the papers in subject matter and point of view are impressive evidence of the fragmentation of our culture and the consequent need for bridgebuilding.

The prevailing mood of the papers is encouraging. There is relatively little "movement against," to use Karen Horney's metaphor, or "movement away from," and there is a good deal of "movement towards." The mood is ironic and constructive rather than contentious and polemic. There is a certain amount of unreconstructed scientism, but not much. There is some philosophical and theological dogmatism, but not as much as one might expect in these times. There is also some digging in separate academic burrows, indifferent to or in escape from the historical weather and oblivious of other burrowings. An encouragingly large number of the participants, however, give serious attention to the process of building and using bridges. There is a good deal of genuine concern for intercommunication and co-operative inquiry.

This mood is not difficult to explain. It derives most obviously from the seriousness of our predicament. An Olympian god might look with amusement and pity on the creatures who scurry together as the earth quakes beneath them. The meeting was held in late August of 1945, and it is not surprising that there was both a sense of one world and also a feeling that there may be only one chance for the survival of that world.

Yet the explanation is not so simple as this. Something better than fear has also been at work. Modern science has been setting an example of creative and co-operative inquiry as a way of problem-solving. Modern democracy has encouraged the pooling of resources for common welfare. Our religious traditions have transmitted perspectives to resist the disintegrating effects of disaster. Perhaps we have availed ourselves of these resources too little and too late. At any rate inspection of the symposium suggests not merely the desperate grasp of the swimmer at a straw but also the persistence of some relatively healthy organs in our body politic.

A few of the better papers, judged by the professed aim of the meeting, should be mentioned. Herman Finer speaks from his experience as a political scientist of the relation between professional specialization and connections with other fields. Depth of analysis in one's own field is required so that "the edges are clear, and therefore the points of connection with the rest of the body are made plain to the others who wish to use this field for their science" (p. 124). Arnold Dresden finds in mathematics some suggestions for the guidance of social experience. He develops interesting analogies from the principle of inversion and the concept of an existence theorem. The discussion between Buell Gallagher and Carleton Coon effectively disentangles the democratic principle of human equality from scientific questions about racial equality and inequality.

Mordecai Kaplan has a very original paper which proposes a way of integrating the study of politics, ethics, and religion, and aims at a common human universe of discourse. Arthur Murphy gives a constructive criticism of dogmatic relativism and dogmatic absolutism. He acknowledges both the facts of existing conflicts in values and the need for commitment, and asks how reason can solve our problem. "The only reason that can solve our social problem is an incarnate reason" and this can operate "only in an environment that will support it." To work for the growth of this sort of environment "is a matter of principle, and concerning it there can be no compromise" (p. 648). In the present, therefore, "we are to use the common interests we already have as the seed bed from which, by co-operative action, further community will grow. Our standpoint is that of a present commitment to an ideal to be actualized. . . ." Yet "*it doth not appear what we shall be*, and to limit the possibilities of shared spiritual experience to those that our present unhappy and divided minds can picture would be the most obvious of errors" (p. 649). Walter Horton discusses some of the "chasms and bridges" which divide and connect Protestants, Jews, and Roman Catholics, with intelligent realism and charity.

Not many practical proposals for solving our problems are made in this symposium—"practical" in the sense of manipulating the external conditions of the human spirit. This is understandable, perhaps, since the problem is defined as one of transforming human attitudes in certain ways. Nevertheless, human personality is conditioned by its impersonal environment, and the discussion might have been more healthily realistic on the whole if more had been said about specific political and economic changes which might be, to use John Bennett's phrase, both "conditions and fruits" of transformed attitudes. Most of the papers, furthermore, are concerned with building cultural bridges between various disciplines and groups in our own culture rather than with the equally urgent problem of building them between different cultures. These limitations must be reckoned as deficiencies in the symposium—however excusable or inevitable they may be—along with the intellectual indigestibility with which most symposia depress the reader, especially one which to achieve its aim must include such a heterogeneity of subject matter and standpoint.

As one reflects on our human and social predicament one is sometimes tempted to the feeling that all talk is futile. It may be no small gain, however, if by such meetings of minds we can come to a more complete and more common understanding of the forces which may destroy us and the forces which might deliver us. And there is good reason for commitment to that reality which is partly manifest in the prevailing mood of this symposium. Our only rational hope is that such a spirit may become incarnate in our collective deeds as well as in our words.

WILLIAM A. CHRISTIAN

Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts.

Prophetic Religion. By J. PHILIP HYATT. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947. pp. 188. \$1.75.

Professor Hyatt's approach to the prophetic religion of the Old Testament is significantly characterized by the effective way in which the teaching of Jesus is related to that of his predecessors. Acknowledging that Jesus is far more to

the Christian than Teacher, or even than Savior, Redeemer, and Lord, the author finds in him a voice that is in the true prophetic succession.

This is accomplished through a selective study of seven of the great prophets—Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Second Isaiah—whose positions are examined and described, and related to the teachings of our Lord. The results of biblical research, both literary and archeological, are assumed. The result is a book suited to the needs of the intelligent nontechnical reader, who is brought to an appreciation of some salient features of the prophetic theology which are also thoroughly Christian.

After two short introductory chapters in which the antecedents of the classical prophets are noted and the setting of each of them is indicated, attention is turned to the basic religious experience of the prophetic call. On the basis of the prophet's commission and task, Dr. Hyatt rejects (p. 48 f.) those etymologies of the word *nabi* which would derive it from roots meaning either "bubble up," "pour forth," or "announce," "speak," and agrees with Dr. W. F. Albright's suggestion (*From the Stone Age to Christianity*, p. 231 f.) connecting it with the Akkadian word "to call," and finding the basic meaning to be "one who is called (by God), one who has a vocation (from God)." This derivation is in keeping with the attitude of the prophets themselves regarding their work.

In a chapter entitled "The Prophetic Criticism of Life" is found a well-presented analysis of prophetic attitudes toward narrowness of vision, false leadership, abuse of economic power, and pride; but the author takes issue with those who "conclude that the prophets were merely champions of the poor, or that they were advocates of the class struggle after the manner of the modern Marxist" (p. 72). He finds them men of independent judgment, zealous only for righteousness, denouncing sin wherever it appeared, and having as their ideal *one* people under God (p. 73).

In the first of two chapters on "The Prophetic View of History" is portrayed the prophetic conviction of a divinely chosen people with a special mission. Whereas other peoples have considered history as a series of recurring cycles, "to the Hebrews . . . history was linear: the past itself showed purpose, and the past contained promises which could be fulfilled only in the future" (p. 89). Yet it is clear from the succeeding chapter that "the prophets were concerned not so much with what *would* happen in every detail as with what *must* happen in view of the eternal nature and purposes of God" (p. 117). Prophecy is contrasted on the one hand with apocalyptic which views the future as mechanical, and on the other hand with the teaching of the false prophets whose predictions of hope were accompanied by no call to repentance or sense of obedience to an ethical God. The true prophet views the future with a strong sense of urgency, and with the understanding that his predictions are usually conditional rather than categorical.

Turning to the question of ritualism, it is noted that the prophets were of one mind in their denunciation of the sacrificial system. It is held that this was condemnation, not merely of abuse of the system, but of the system itself. The conclusion is reached that they considered the sacrificial system to be largely pagan, having been derived from Canaanite origins rather than through the Mosaic revelation.

With respect to "The Patriotism of the Prophets," it is acknowledged that because of their unyielding criticism of the state and its policies, several of them were accused of treason. This fact, however, should lead to reconsideration of

what constitutes true patriotism. Consistently opposing militarism, and even to some extent the institution of monarchy itself, the prophets urged their people "not to seek to be a great nation in ways that were closed to them," such as ways of imperial, commercial, or cultural power, but to realize that "they must be true to the only kind of greatness open to them by nature and by divine decree—greatness in being a bearer of a unique revelation, a nation famous for its moral and spiritual power" (p. 147). Such patriotism is of the highest order, for it truly seeks the deepest welfare of a people.

The two chapters entitled "God of the Prophets" and "The Prophetic View of Sin and Forgiveness" are a review of the basic elements of biblical theology. It is a pleasure, in view of discussions in recent years, to find Dr. Hyatt categorically declaring that "the prophets were monotheists from Amos on" (p. 151). God is a God of moral requirements, a spiritual person, controller of nature and history, and sovereign Lord, "the father of individuals as well as of the nation." Sin is rebellion against him, and forgiveness must be contingent upon one's renouncing this rebellion and determining to obey his will.

The chief value of the book is its clear and readable restatement of the chief teachings of the prophets, and its continuous correlation of them to the Christian faith as taught by Jesus. It is usable alike for introduction or for review, and deserves wide use.

GURDON C. OXTOBY

San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo, California.

The Johannine Epistles. By C. H. DODD. The Moffatt New Testament Commentary. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947. pp. lxxi-168. \$2.75.

The appearance of the present volume from the able pen of Professor Dodd reduces to one (Thessalonians) the number of those needed to complete the Moffatt series. The book is well written and distinctly readable (this holds true not only of the introduction but also of the commentary proper, a notable achievement); it will certainly rank among the more mature and practically valuable volumes of the series and should prove the more "handy" to users by virtue of the thinner paper on which the text is printed and by which the bulk is reduced.

The introduction gives a closely argued summary of what can be known or reasonably inferred about the author of the three documents known as the Epistles of John, the date and place of their composition, the circumstances that provoked them, and the place they hold in the development of early Christian literature and thought. The commentary elucidates in thoughtful fashion the text of the Moffatt translation, not without clear indications of Professor Dodd's own preference where he would depart from Moffatt's interpretation. Its value is enhanced by the wider horizons that appear when the words and ideas of the First Epistle are interpreted in the light of the development of early Christian thought (e.g., the Logos, pp. 3-6; Fellowship, pp. 13-15; Knowledge of God, pp. 29-31; World and Church, pp. 39-43; Antichrist, pp. 48-51; Christ, pp. 58-62; Prophecy, pp. 103-106; and Love, pp. 107-112). At several points the thoughtful reader will be happy to find precious asides reflecting the commentator's own wrestle with the problem of Christian faith and life in the modern world (e.g., on expiation, pp. 28-29; the church and the social environment, p. 46; sinlessness, the ideal and the actual, p. 81; love, p. 118; and faith, p. 137).

The approach to First John followed by Professor Dodd, the very one that makes his book of such practical value and so appropriate to the Moffatt Series, is at the same time a factor in its greatest shortcoming as a contribution to the understanding of the individuality of the document. There is a problem at the heart of this tract, treatise, or letter, call it what you will—a problem only dimly to be surmised from the new commentary, yet of such proportions that it played a part in suggesting to Professor Frame of Union Seminary, whom Professor Moffatt had originally persuaded to undertake the work, that he ask to be relieved because (as we heard the story) he found himself unable after years of diligent and meticulous study to solve it. The problem is that of the peculiar nature of the world of mystical thought in which the writer of First John moved and by which the carrying power and individuality of his most significant expressions (e.g., being of the truth, being of God, loving God, being in the light) are determined. To show, as Professor Dodd has so ably done, what connects the author with the Apostolic Church leads to the threshold of this temple but scarcely to its innermost shrine. His references to Plato, Hellenistic mysticism, Philo, the Gnostics, and the Hermetica are insufficient to reveal even the dim outlines of this shrine; and the material which Odeberg and others have been collecting to clarify analogous ideas in the Fourth Gospel is not mentioned, perhaps largely because it would have been too technical for a volume of this series.

Perchance the fact that he has set forth so ably what connects the author of First John with the Apostolic Church in this publication will impel Professor Dodd in another to clarify for us what we need so desperately to know about the roots and the implications of the "Johannine" mysticism. Such an enterprise might cause him to change somewhat the wording of the topical outline of the document, which seems to reflect nineteenth-century ideas rather than early second. It might also suggest some slight changes in the conception of the author of First John whose supposed interest in the words of the "New Law" contrasts so sharply with his disinterest in the words of the Old Testament, and who so overshadows the scene as an individual that the existence of others like him, who could have written Second and Third John, never seems to come to mind.

CARL H. KRAELING

Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

The Bible Today. By C. H. DODD. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. pp. ix-168. \$2.50.

It is indicative of a trend in current biblical study that this book by a world-famous New Testament scholar deals not with the New Testament alone but with the Bible as a whole. Part of the weakness in recent biblical theology and in present-day Christian thinking arises from the fact that we have separated into two parts the Scripture which the church always regarded as one. The church formed the canon of the New Testament, not to replace the Old Testament, but to provide the completion of the Christian Scripture. We can never achieve a Christian interpretation of either Testament until we consider them as vitally and indissolubly united. One merit of Dodd's book is that he deals with the Bible in a way which pays proper attention to the unique qualities of each part but nevertheless gives a unified view of the Book. He also points out the essential role of the church in forming and handing down the Scripture. The very con-

ception of Scripture excludes the possibility of a merely individualistic faith held apart from life in the church of Christ.

The seven chapters deal with the following subjects: "The Bible: What It Is," "The Approach to the Bible," "The Old Testament," "The New Testament," "History as Revelation," "The Bible and the Historical Problem of Our Time," and "History and the Individual."

The second chapter has a fresh discussion of the necessity, the function, and the limitations of critical historical study. The next chapters survey the story and content of the two Testaments and show what they contain: "a revelation of God in history" (p. 14), "God confronting man in judgment and mercy, and challenging him with a call, to which he must respond" (p. 53), and particularly in the New Testament, "the gospel of Christ and the law of Christ" (p. 86), which law is "an interpretation, in terms of ethical obligation, of God's ways with men in Christ" (p. 85).

In the light of the biblical content, Dodd then studies the meaning of history and especially of the situation we face. On this subject he says many instructive things, although I feel at times a failure to take time as seriously as the biblical writers did. No amount of concern to make the gospel relevant for our day can set us free from "a remote and alien past" of God's revelation in Christ (p. 163), or enable us to say without qualification of the communion service: "It is no longer past history. It is happening, and we are there" (p. 162). It happened in the past, and it has a meaning for our day, and also a reference to the eschatological future to which I fear Dodd fails to give a real time sense such as the New Testament intends.

We may thus argue with Dodd on specific points, but what he writes is scholarly, readable, and stimulating.

FLOYD V. FILSON

McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, Illinois.

Hellenistic Greek Texts. By ALLEN WIKGREN, with the collaboration of ERNEST CADMAN COLWELL and RALPH MARCUS. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1947. pp. xxvi-275. \$3.50.

A Hellenistic Greek Reader, by Colwell and Mantry, which proved very useful, is here expanded by two-thirds; but the material here printed is so often a new substitution for selections printed in the earlier edition that this volume may well be used to supplement rather than supplant the older book. The earlier edition was provided with notes on the texts, in the tradition of helps to the student, but in the new book all these are omitted. Personally I should rather have seen them expanded, for there are few teachers, let alone students, who can leap from one Hellenistic author to another without some help both in language and style and in the basic meaning of the texts in view of Hellenistic civilization.

The object of the new edition was apparently to make it an introduction not only to the *Koine* but to Hellenistic civilization, especially to its religious and philosophical aspects. For this purpose the "Selections from Pagan Hellenistic Greeks" is quite the most expanded of all, and a new section was added to the Introduction, five pages on "Hellenistic Culture and Religious Syncretism," along with a bibliography introductory to this subject. The hope that Hellenistic civilization will come to make sense even to a good classical scholar through such selections, let alone to an ordinary American student, seems to me very remote. It is like hoping that

on the basis of the four pages here given from Philo the student will conceive of Philo as anything but an obscure (if not comic) curiosity.

For linguistic study and illustration, however, these selections are extremely useful. One can only wish that there were more places in this country where the book will actually be used.

ERWIN R. GOODENOUGH

Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

The Way to Christ. By JACOB BOEHME. A new translation by JOHN JOSEPH STOUT. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947. pp. xxxix-254. \$3.00.

This reappearance of Boehme's *The Way to Christ* is justified by the translator's illuminating introduction, the evident care with which the translation is made, and, more than all, by the present expanding need for making more available the classics of mystical literature. Since *The Way to Christ* is the simplest of Boehme's works, being more devotional and less philosophical than most of his writings, its reappearance makes possible a wider acquaintance with a notable mystic whose profound thoughts often remain hidden behind antiquated symbols and an illogical, disorderly development of ideas. It is appropriate that the book should begin with a foreword by Rufus M. Jones, who first introduced Dr. Stout (as well as the writer of this review) to the writings of Jacob Boehme.

The Way to Christ, the only book of Boehme's to be published during his lifetime, appeared in Görlitz in 1624. It is a collection of short tracts, the original three having been increased by from one to five others in the course of its more than thirty printings. Seven of these appear in this translation. They are of varying length and worth. As in other writings of Boehme, passages of great beauty and deep penetration alternate with arid pages. The *Supersensual Life* with its magnificent discourse on love and the *Dialogue Between an Enlightened and an Unenlightened Soul* with its graphic description of the stages of the soul's progress toward unity with God will, for many readers, prove to provide the most illumination. Some may be attracted by the prayers scattered through *True Resignation* and other tracts. These are unsurpassed in the intensity of their fervor. *Divine Contemplation* is the most philosophical of the treatises in this collection and, though difficult, it forms a good introduction to Boehme's system of thought.

The book reveals Boehme as no ordinary philosopher, loving wisdom for its own sake, but rather as an evangelist with an intense love for his fellow men, pleading with them for their soul's salvation. But it must be added that he is no ordinary evangelist, for his plan of salvation is based on the whole cosmic process by which the universe has arisen out of the dark abyss to find its final consummation in the Kingdom of God. Whatever might be said of the truth of Boehme's philosophy as applied to the world without, there can be no doubt of his penetrating insight into the interior process by which the soul evolves from inner conflict to "a new birth in the Divine Harmony of Heaven." By making the goal "harmony" rather than identity with God, Boehme preserves the essential Christian character of his thought.

Dr. Stout's translation is, perhaps, somewhat inferior in literary quality to that made by John Sparrow in 1647, but it is less wordy and more faithful to the original. His efforts, however, to preserve the meaning of the author sometimes detract from the simple devotional tone of Boehme's German, which is preserved

by Sparrow. For example, Sparrow's "Oh thou life and power of God" becomes "Oh thou, God's life and vitality"; and Sparrow's "Do thou overcome self in me. Make my soul ashamed of its own will" becomes "Overcome thou my I-ness within me. Make my soul ashamed of its egocentric will." The present translator has a special qualification for knowing what Boehme means; he was reared to speak the so-called Pennsylvania Dutch which, as he says in his introduction, is an antique German dialect "carrying some ancient implications in its words."

We owe a debt to Dr. Stoudt for this book and the light it throws on our spiritual pathway, and also to the publishers, Harper and Brothers, for adding *The Way to Christ* to their current list of devotional classics.

HOWARD H. BRINTON

Pendle Hill, Wallingford, Pennsylvania.

The Idea of Perfection in the Western World. By MARTIN FOSS. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947. pp. 102. \$1.50.

This little book is a gem. Its close-knit logic, its careful definitions, and its challenge to traditional philosophical opinions should gain for it a widespread reading far beyond the limited appeal of its prosaic title.

Mr. Foss has given his attention to an analysis of that element in Greek thought which has puzzled Christian theologians and philosophers for a long time. Most philosophers are content to point out that the Greeks have a limited concept of perfection, whereas the ontological argument goes beyond this to an infinite perfection; but while the Greek and Christian traditions have enjoyed an uneasy coalition throughout the centuries, it has usually been at the cost of fundamental Christian insights. Mr. Foss's conclusion is simple enough: get rid of the Greek idea of perfection, indeed, get rid of all concepts of perfection, and turn to the fundamental concepts of love, service, history, "the beyond," and faith. Finite perfection is helpful to science, but it is of no value whatever in the business of living.

In some areas of living, most notably in modern art, what Mr. Foss has to say is commonplace. Art can never be simply "art for art's sake" or "art for use." The idea of perfection in art reduces it to mere technique, whether abstract or concrete. Ugliness cannot be contrasted with beauty, for both are caught up in the "expression" of the artist.

Kant almost saw the weakness of the idea of perfection when he broke away from an ethics of ends. That is why he talked about the "sublime." "The fulfillment of ends is only useful, never good," says Foss (p. 76). There is an "infinite urge" which carries one beyond the "medium-sphere of life." It is love which reaches beyond the static and fixed stations of life. "The ethics of service makes it the duty of man, not only to do his duty, but to do more" (p. 91). Only faith can know this kind of living in the realm of persons rather than things; faith gives us a living God and not a concept of "absolute perfection."

The brilliance of Foss's logic and the penetration of his analysis carry the reader along. There is no doubt that Foss is right about the limitations of Greek philosophy in the realms of art and religion (and it must be remembered that he grants that in science the Greek way of dealing with things and symbols is useful). He is saying, and saying better than most of us, what the philosophers of art are saying, what Kant tried to say, and what John Macmurray pointed out from a different point of view in *The Clue to History* and Gilson in *God and Philosophy*.

However, there are some questions, two of which should be mentioned here: (1) "A relative attitude," he writes, "falls short with regard to the fact that man knows himself as absolute" (p. 84). This statement is either nonsense or needs evidence to support it. (2) The dichotomy between faith and knowledge remains, although philosophy is supposed to unite them. At this point, Foss is as unsuccessful as were Kant and the Scholastics, although he sees that something must be done about it. The earliest Christians wanted to baptize Greek philosophy and the later Scholastics and Reformers declared it anathema. Foss classifies knowledge with pantheism and faith with the living God, and this seems an unwarranted conclusion. It is true that philosophy must be thought and that religion must be lived, but if there is one truth as well as one faith, then knowledge and faith must deal with the same order of existence no matter what is beyond.

RANDOLPH CRUMP MILLER

Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, California.

Seeds of Redemption. By BERNARD EUGENE MELAND. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. pp. ix-162. \$2.50.

These are days in which thoughtful people have the terrifying experience of seeing their hopes for our culture cut off, one by one. Some of last year's possibilities are already impossible, and though the author of this book finds seeds of redemption even now germinating within human nature and society, he himself is not sure that they will have time to ripen. "Something radically redemptive must occur within five years or less, changing in decisive ways, if not the hearts of men, at least their ways and organized efforts" (p. vii).

Professor Meland's book, which grew from lectures delivered at the Fourteenth Annual Pastors' Institute of the University of Chicago, is an attempt to describe these seeds of redemption and the conditions of their growth. Beautifully and vigorously written, with a style which occasionally approaches liturgical fervor, and with a compassionate warmth which itself illustrates that "gentle sensitivity" which the author regards as the mark of God's creative power, the lectures reformulate the Christian doctrine of redemption in terms applicable to our cultural crisis. Their philosophical premise is the naturalism for which Henry Nelson Wieman and the author have long been known.

Theologically, Meland's argument is a protest against the gulf which Christian orthodoxy opens between divine creation and redemption; the redeeming God is a "sensitive nature" immanent within creation. Ethically, it is a call to an awakened and deepened sense of our cultural need to turn from force back to the gentle sources of unity and sympathy which nature offers for our healing. Religiously, it is a cry for penitence and a quest for the divine resources to overcome our sin (though sin comes too closely to resemble mere mediocrity). Philosophically, therefore, it seeks to correct both the "supernaturalism" of orthodoxy and the subjectivity of humanism, by grounding our hope for peace and mutuality in the evolutionary order of nature itself.

The spiritual insights of the book are admirable, and Meland has much to say which should emerge in the preaching of our day. His condemnation of mediocrity, and his appeal for the appreciative awareness which unites us to our fellows, his sense of the human values of worship, his suggestions concerning the educational

values in biblical stories, and his very practical definition of Christian moral imperatives contain living truths for the modern spirit.

Weakest, on the other hand, is the philosophical orientation. The philosophy of modern science provides little evidence for too easily identifying gentle and sensitive processes in nature with integrative and healing processes; here the author seems still too much influenced by the liberal progressivism which he seeks to correct. "Creative nature," whether in man or his environment, fails fully to serve as measure of either the depth of sin or the height of salvation. Not only do the remarkably sensitive discussions of worship and Christian love imply more of God than a "sensitive nature within nature" (p. 62); as the author's own faith receives fuller expression, God is correspondingly personalized. He is "spirit," "our unlimited companion," "appreciative awareness" which "contemplates our greatest good." The footnote (p. 60) in which a conception of God as mind or moral will is repudiated contains inferences which would be valid only if ruthlessness were moral and abstract qualities more real than the things they qualify. The Christian message of the book far outreaches its naturalistic foundations.

LEROY E. LOEMKER

Dean, The Graduate School, Emory University, Georgia.

The Christian Hope of Immortality. By A. E. TAYLOR. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. pp. 112. \$2.00.

In *The Christian Hope of Immortality*, the late professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh has provided a compact, closely reasoned study of an inexhaustible theme. The book will not furnish preachers with ready-made illustrations and quotations for use in sermons, but it will do something better. It will stimulate critical and creative thinking, and will help the reader at the point of eliminating sentimentality from popular attitudes toward death and the life beyond the grave. The author develops a strong, positive argument for immortality that is in harmony with classical Christian tradition.

There are several points of particular excellence which may be noted:

1. The author emphasizes the qualitative aspect of eternal life. Mere living on after death has no Christian significance. What matters is "a life of a new quality, with new interests and purposes" (p. 9); and this eternal kind of life we can begin to live this side of the grave.

2. Significant also is the author's synthesis of the Hebraic concept of "resurrection" and the Greek concept of "immortality." *Resurrection* underscores the thought of the wholeness of the personal life hereafter and connects it "directly and intimately with the idea of God" (p. 11). *Immortality* emphasizes the spiritual quality of the after-life. Christianity integrates the two. Who now will furnish us a new term embracing these integrated insights?

3. The author is on firm ground when he bases his faith in immortality on the existence of God and his maintenance of a rational and moral universe. The key question is this: What kind of universe are we living in? If our study of human existence leads to the conclusion that an intelligent and moral Creator presides over human nature and destiny, then and then only can we affirm immortality in the Christian sense with defensible certitude.

4. This discussion also furnishes a valuable synthesis of "natural" and "re-

vealed" theology with reference to the theme under discussion, especially in Chapter V.

5. The author justly castigates certain popular conceptions of the immortal life. He finds little of significance in the work of spiritistic mediums and purported communications from the dead. Sentimental hymns come in for due criticism. The same sort of criticism can be directed against a certain type of sermon and devotional book. The immortal life, Christian faith affirms, is a new life and no mere prolongation of this one. Chapter VI has many illuminating insights at this point.

6. The last chapter stimulates fresh thinking on the subject of the final fate of those who reject God's overtures to man or who have had no opportunity to respond to them in a Christian sense. The author emphasizes the irreversibility of history, the rational necessity for an end to probation and a final judgment, but he does not think that our probation necessarily ends at death (p. 83).

A careful study of this book will add new dimensions to one's Christian philosophy of life and death. It will help to deliver him from the shallow this-worldliness which has blighted much liberal religious thinking in recent years.

HOWARD L. STIMMEL

The Methodist Church, White River Junction, Vermont.

Christ in the Drama. By FRED EASTMAN. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. pp. 174. \$2.50.

This new book by Professor Eastman is popular in a good sense. The bulk of it consists of his retelling, in an interesting and deft way, the plots of nine outstanding modern plays: Shaw's *Androcles* and *Saint Joan*, Galsworthy's *Strife* and *The Pigeon*, Masefield's *The Coming of Christ*, Williams' *The Corn is Green*, O'Neill's *Days Without End*, Connelly's *Green Pastures*, and Wilder's *Our Town*. There are besides some very brief comments on a score or more of other plays, including two or three of Shakespeare's. A concluding chapter describes the movement in which Professor Eastman is himself most involved—the attempt by various groups in America and England to revive and develop religious drama for popular audiences. Here his remarks are most valuable, and we wish the chapter had been much longer.

It must be admitted, however, that the book's title is a catch-all. Most of the plays chosen for review have only a tenuous kind of relevance to Christ. In some of them, I would say, certain brands of modern sentiment are a more powerful and formative ingredient than the wisdom of the Bible. Professor Eastman is inclined to ignore such shortcomings, happy enough if he can find some appealing spiritual insight to record. All he claims in common for his repertory of selections is that "we cannot imagine any of them written in a culture which Christ had not influenced." This is sufficiently broad, and spares the author the difficulty of analyzing the exact nature of the influence, as to whether it be orthodox or heterodox. Since in Professor Eastman's view art has to do with "understanding" as opposed to "creed," he is hardly in a position anyway to undertake a judgment of plays at the theological level. When he attempts briefly to do so in some summary evaluations of Shakespeare, the results are what might be expected. He finds Shakespeare devoid of hope for the redemption of sinners, lacking a gospel of grace and of the Kingdom of God, and but very little concerned for the welfare of the masses. One cannot

help but wonder how Professor Eastman would evaluate such modern dramatists as T. S. Eliot, Dorothy Sayers, and Norman Nicholson. He names their religious works but omits discussing them—perhaps because their underlying creedal structures make them too baffling.

I note only one error of fact in the book, the statement (p. 35) that Prince Hamlet's mother was guilty of "murder and incest." To charge Gertrude with murder is to go beyond any evidence in *Hamlet*. Even the charge of incest, it should be remembered, is presented not as a fact but as a question over which the Council of Denmark and Hamlet have opposite views. I note also one example of Professor Eastman's literary taste that particularly distresses me—his praise of the ending of *The Family Portrait*. Mary, the mother of our Lord, is persuading Judah (one of the sons gratuitously ascribed to her by the playwright) to name his firstborn after Jesus. "It's a nice name," she says, "I'd like him not to be forgotten." Professor Eastman's comment is: "Where is there a more moving last line?"

ROY W. BATTENHOUSE

Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Miracles: A Preliminary Study. By C. S. LEWIS. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. pp. 220. \$2.50.

Here is another episode in C. S. Lewis' valiant war against the Modern Mind. Because he is a brilliant writer, gifted in popularizing intellectual processes of a high order without "talking down," one may be tempted simply to enjoy and applaud, without taking his arguments too seriously. The devils he depicted so well in *The Screwtape Letters* quite possibly have this much part in his writing, that they contribute precisely this impression of modern cleverness and thus make him thoroughly popular. And the discerning mind tends to be suspicious of writers who are too popular.

But in this book Mr. Lewis is saying something important and we can only be grateful that he says it so well. His purpose is not historical investigation as to whether any specific miracles actually occurred. Such investigation, he says, can properly be made only by trained historians. He deals rather with the philosophical presuppositions, since historians usually start from unacknowledged and unexamined assumptions borrowed from the mental climate of their time. Though they continually beg the question, their authority is accepted by the unwary reader because he shares these assumptions. A biblical writing is confidently dated after a given event which it predicts, because it is assumed that real prediction is impossible; and this is called historical evidence. Stories involving the miraculous are seen as indicating a primitive, confused mentality, and probably of third-hand origin, simply because they involve the miraculous.

Naturalism—the doctrine that only Nature, an interlocked system which constitutes "the whole show," exists—leads to self-contradiction. We are quite sure, both in science and in real life, that "no thought is valid if it can be fully explained as the result of irrational causes" (p. 27); in so far as thoughts are affected by a liver attack, by psychological conditioning, by economic background, they are automatically discounted. If the whole collective process of human thought is the result of irrational causes, all of it is invalidated. The process of thought called naturalism thus destroys itself (for if the total system of nature is rational,

we have not naturalism but pantheism). The alternative is some form of supernaturalism. Human reason, if valid, must be in some sense supernatural; so also is that special form of it called morality.

We find in ourselves, then, a strange frontier situation between reason and nature, in which reason can modify nature, but nature, though it can confuse or exclude reason, cannot modify it. However, our reason is obviously intermittent, imperfect, derivative; and since it cannot come from nonreason it must come from some Reason which eternally exists on its own and constitutes a Supernature. It is a relief, in our day, to find a Christian thinker who opposes what is commonly considered reason, still taking reason itself so seriously.

The next question is whether Nature can be proved to be such that supernatural interferences are impossible, or whether she might, so to speak, be designed to suffer gracefully and absorb such interferences, in view of larger purposes beyond her own. And one must ask whether God is likely to be the sort of Being who would work miracles. Why not? The supreme Poet, like the greatest earthly poets, might be expected to produce occasional variations of the meter for special effects.

As in all his books, Mr. Lewis is skillful in puncturing widespread naturalistic beliefs. Laws do not *cause* events to happen, they simply state the pattern to which every event must conform. But the real universe is "the torrent of actual events," and this must originate somewhere else, in some primary "Facthood." It is not true (he says in his "Chapter on Red Herrings") that people believed in miracles more easily in ancient times because they did not know "the laws of nature"; St. Joseph knew as well as we do that a virgin birth is contrary to these laws; a miracle is by definition an exception to the known rule. "All interferences leave the law perfectly true. But every prediction of what will happen in a given instance is made under the proviso 'other things being equal' or 'if there are no interferences'" (pp. 69-70). It is also not true that men could once believe in miracles because they thought the earth was the largest thing in the universe and man the most important creature. In the first place, Ptolemy's system, universally accepted in the Dark and Middle Ages, taught the spatial insignificance of the earth; and secondly, Christianity has never claimed that all was made for man or that God loved man because man was relatively "important."

There is much traditional imagery in Christianity which strikes the modern intellectual as primitive, mythological, belonging to the childhood of the race. But mental images abound in all our thought, which are not at all adequate to what we are thinking about and yet do not affect the validity of our thinking. "If absurd images meant absurd thought, then we should all be thinking nonsense all the time" (p. 89). Furthermore, the modern popular religion, a vague sort of pantheism, is also accompanied by imagery, and really owes its appeal to the fact that *this* imagery does not make one uncomfortable.

The God of religion-in-general is not "anthropomorphic" and of course would not choose, or command, or work miracles; he is a great spiritual force (winds, tides, electricity), an endless sea (diffused gas or fluid), a dome of white radiance. . . . Pantheism is always felt to be new and modern and intellectually superior, because people learn about it when they become adults, whereas they learned of Christianity in childhood. But actually pantheism is the oldest form of religion, immemorial in India, most congenial to the primitive animist in us, resting on

spontaneous picture-thinking. It is Christianity, with God conceived as personal, that is comparatively new and difficult! The deepest taproot of modern pantheism is the fear of passing over "from the notion of an abstract and negative deity to the living God" (p. 113).

In the second half of the book Mr. Lewis writes eloquently of "The Grand Miracle," the Incarnation, and of the various recorded derivative miracles, with art and insight. He defends the appropriateness of all Christ's miracles; it seems he might better have omitted the withering of the fig tree. But he rightly appeals in his epilogue to the reader to study the historical evidence for himself—beginning with the New Testament and not with the books about it. He warns that the writings of modern scholars must be watched continually for naturalistic assumptions; for even those who are sincerely Christian usually, with almost Quixotic honorableness, bend over backward to be fair to their antagonists and "eliminate the supernatural wherever it is even remotely possible to do so" (p. 197).

The present reviewer, who once taught college Bible courses pretty much in the Wellhausen tradition, would be glad of the leisure now to re-examine the whole biblical history in the manner Mr. Lewis suggests. Even in those days, there were times when the teacher was disturbed by intelligent students of conservative background who had the wit to see that actual historical and linguistic evidence was insufficient to bolster up the evolutionary scheme presented, without the supplementary modern philosophical assumptions!

EDWARD SEYMOUR
New York City.

The Christian Significance of Karl Marx. By ALEXANDER MILLER. New York. The Macmillan Company, 1947. pp. 117. \$1.75.

The current excitement about Communism has little to do with the concerns of the author of this little volume, either in content or intellectual level, but still should make the theme attractive to thinking churchmen. In discussing current affairs, we may not agree with *The New Statesman and Nation* in the statement that "the American people, responding to a well-organized propaganda campaign, is now possessed of an anti-communist hysteria far stronger than any disapproval of Germany which it displayed during the war." But the seriousness of the conflict makes clear and Christian thinking essential, and *The Christian Significance of Karl Marx* qualifies on both scores.

The author, a Presbyterian minister and leader in the Student Christian Movement, is prepared to give Marxism its due. He perceives that "the chronic temptation to by-pass economic demands in the name of the 'spiritual' is too easily exploited by the forces of reaction and counter-revolution" (p. 2). Mr. Miller, known as "Lex" by thousands of student Christians, served as General Secretary of the New Zealand Student Christian Movement for a time; he then was minister of a Presbyterian church in the east of London until the blitz; from 1942 to 1944, he was associated with Rev. George MacLeod in the remarkable work of the Iona Community. Those who know Iona will appreciate that this identifies the author as one staunchly Christian and deeply concerned with socio-economic problems. Before returning to New Zealand a year ago, Mr. Miller directed the "Students in Industry" project of the Canadian S. C. M. at Welland, Ontario. From this wealth of experience, the author has developed a vigorously Christian understanding

of the relation of the common life to matters of faith. Making use of the method of scientific socialism, the writing exposes the shallow thinking and practices of middle-class Protestantism.

Any reviewer would have to confess an injustice to this brilliant little book: it is certainly one of the indispensable studies of recent years. With a profound grasp of the contribution which Marxist analysis can make to an intelligent Christian understanding of events and forces, the author is thoroughly Christian in his own commitment. "Marx and Engels are right in their discovery of economic determinism, of the effect of the material conditions of life upon the intellectual and artistic structures of man's thought and imagination, upon his philosophy and his religion. For that we are eternally indebted to them; but when they go on to set Communist social consciousness free, as it were, and to affirm that the Communist dialectic view of history enables us to describe the future and the goal of history, then they themselves pass from science to religion, from empiricism to Utopian phantasy" (p. 57).

There is none of the shallow identification of the Christian historical hope with the Communist post-socialist society which makes a certain type of "liberal" sound so thin. As a matter of fact, some "liberals" will have a hard time in coming to grips with the author's thought: he is at once so thoroughly radical in political and economic thought and so thoroughly Christian in theology. But it is time, anyway, that we distinguish between those who are "liberals" because they are concerned with questions of social action, and those who are "liberals" because they do not believe what the church teaches.

With liberalism dominant in many of our largest pulpits, there is less and less connection between theological freethinking and ethical insistence. "The Church is never the completely disinterested servant of the gospel: it is always, in greater or less degree, perverted to become the handmaid of the dominant class" (p. 81).

With this warning the author moves us to a basic self-examination.

FRANKLIN H. LITTELL

The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man: An Essay on Speculative Thought in the Ancient Near East. By H. and H. A. FRANKFORT, JOHN A. WILSON, THORKILD JACOBSEN, WILLIAM A. IRWIN. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947. pp. vii-401. \$4.00.

No one even casually acquainted with the religion and literature of the ancient Near East can have failed to notice the distinctive features which characterize the beliefs of the three main cultural communities there. The religious philosophies of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Hebrews have inspired considerable speculation for decades and much has been written describing and interpreting their differences. Recent excavation and research, however, have brought additional information to light; consequently the time is ripe for a new analysis. The present volume is designed for just that purpose. A joint project of five scholars, it benefits from the special contribution of each person in his chosen field and yet is woven into a single consistent whole by the skillful blending of all data to support one central theme. The contents may be sketched briefly as follows:

An introductory chapter by the Frankforts sets the stage by outlining the

program to be followed and defining the limits within which the investigation is to be carried out. Here, too, we find definitions of the terms which will be employed in the course of the study and, most important of all, the authors' description of the "primitive" human psychology which they intend to demonstrate in the succeeding chapters. Following this Wilson describes in three chapters the ancient Egyptian concept of the nature of the universe, the structure of the state and the values of life. He purposely stresses those elements in Egypt which differ markedly from either Mesopotamia or the Hebrews in order that the contrast may be brought into sharper focus. Although little new material is presented the study is accomplished with such clarity and vigor as to create the impression of novelty. Next, Mesopotamia is treated in three chapters by Jacobsen with the major emphasis placed upon Sumerian sources. He points out a significant parallel between the historic Mesopotamian political organization and their concept of the cosmos as a super-state run along similar lines. A study of the proper integration of the individual human being into the twofold polity closes the section. Much of the Sumerian material, it should be pointed out, appears for the first time in a nontechnical work and its publication will be welcomed by specialist and nonspecialist alike. The Hebrew concept of God and man, their relationships inter se and the gradual adjustment of the Hebrews to urban rather than nomadic society is discussed in four chapters by Irwin according to the current tenets of Old Testament criticism. The book concludes with a sketch by the Frankforts wherein they trace the final emancipation of speculative thought from myth in the growing empiricism of Greece. Moving from the concrete concept of an animate universe in rapport with mankind toward the abstract concept of an impersonal, inanimate world in which man lives a unique existence, we pass, so the authors assert, out of the realm of mythopoetic subjectivism into a rational objectivism with "reason acknowledged as the highest arbiter" (p. 386).

The several authors are eminently qualified to treat their respective fields and the result of their collaboration is a book containing authoritative and enlightening studies of the three major cultures of the ancient Near East. The integration of the whole, however, based upon an assumed religio-philosophical evolution in which each culture is said to have played a part, is, perhaps, the weakest point in a remarkable volume. Some may dispute the authors' assumption that religious concepts can spring only from human speculation and argue that allowance must be made for a special revelation from God as orthodox Christianity holds. In any case, one has the feeling that the theory that an "I-and-Thou" relationship between "primitive" man and the universe gradually gave way to the more sophisticated "I-and-It" concept of a more advanced age is often forced in its application to the specific situations related in the later chapters. Finally, one wonders if a study of "speculative thought" ought not to include some treatment of the sciences which were so highly developed in Egypt and Mesopotamia rather than be limited to a discussion of the philosophy of religion.

However much one may differ with the authors in their interpretation a debt of gratitude must be expressed, nevertheless, for their having made available a considerable body of interesting and important material relating to ancient Near Eastern religion.

FRANCIS R. STEELE

The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.

The Modern Message of the Minor Prophets. By RAYMOND CALKINS. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947. pp. 205. \$3.00.

When one of the outstanding preachers of America puts into printed form his discoveries of modern values in ancient writings, we may be sure that it is worth our while to discover what he has to say to us. Dr. Raymond Calkins was pastor of First Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts, until 1940. Since that time he has been pastor emeritus, but it is apparent that he has kept himself vitally aware of the findings of modern scholarship.

After a brief introduction giving the history of the compilation and canonizations of the "Book of the Twelve," Dr. Calkins treats each of the minor prophets in turn. The plan throughout is to discuss the writer and to summarize his message and significance in Part I of each chapter; Part II is a detailed discussion of the written document itself. An Appendix giving an "Exegesis of the Text" concludes the study, and is designed to include material that would normally be included in footnotes. Much of this material would have been unnecessary if a modern translation had been used instead of the Authorized Version.

In spite of the position of the author that "the prophets belong in a class by themselves, a series of inspired men who present to us a unique spiritual phenomenon" (p. 10), he nevertheless succeeds in portraying them as very human beings whose messages arise from the challenge of contemporary needs. He would confine "the whole prophetic era" to the days between "Amos (c. 750 B.C.) and Jonah (c. 300 B.C.)," yet elsewhere (p. 13) he states, "of course, there had been prophets before Amos: Samuel, Elijah, Micaiah son of Imlah." And in a discussion of the last chapters of Zechariah he indicates that prophetic activity continued until the close of the canon of prophecy (p. 126), and even after that date; for "the scribes had closed the Canon of the Prophets before the Book of Daniel had been completed" (p. 10).

There are times when the reader gets the impression that Dr. Calkins is making a formal bow to the scholar but is not accepting the implications of the scholar's findings. For example, he indicates that Amos 1:1 is a late editorial addition (p. 16), nevertheless he uses that verse to date the Book of Amos. There is much firmer evidence upon which to date the book, and his case would have been strengthened had he been content to use that evidence. The reader may be disappointed, too, that the author does not apparently agree with the position of the modern scholar that man has grown in his religious knowledge. It avails little to be able to date the various literary layers of prophetic or other writings as a literary exercise. But after literary fragments have been identified and dated they may be studied in chronological sequence. Such study will enable us to understand the steps that man has taken in religious experience. Too often scholarship has stopped at the place of analysis and has not moved forward to the place of synthesis.

This text is designed to acquaint the readers with the modern application of the messages of the Minor Prophets. In spite of the few shortcomings already mentioned the author succeeds admirably in achieving his purpose. His introduction summarizes well his discovery concerning the prophets: "What gives their message its permanent significance for us of this day is its realization of the devastating effect of sin on personal and social life, combined with its firm hold on the possibilities of the final redemption of mankind" (p. 12).

WALTER G. WILLIAMS

The Iliff School of Theology, Denver, Colorado.

Jesus: What Manner of Man. By HENRY J. CADBURY. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. pp. xii-123. \$2.25.

The Shaffer lectureship at Yale Divinity School, though one of the newer ones in the American theological scene (established in 1929-30), has already distinguished itself through the worth-while contributions it has made to our understanding of the "life, character, and teachings of Jesus," the avowed purpose for which it was created. This latest addition to the series, only six of which have been published, in no way falls short of the pace that has been set by its predecessors.

Dr. Cadbury's has long been recognized as a careful, keen-thinking mind, and one which must be reckoned with in the field of liberal Christian scholarship. This book, containing as it does the residuum of his thinking through years of patient research upon the person and work of Jesus, will be read with more than passing interest. Due to the fact that it was prepared as a series of lectures before a group of twentieth-century "theologs," it contains many contemporary references, several of them of a definitely homiletic tenor (cf. p. 27). Another illustration of its contemporary quality will be found in the somewhat casual way by which the study is introduced, namely, that we attempt to rate the personality of Jesus according to a standard, present-day employment questionnaire.

Six results of the author's research in the message of Jesus stand out in the reviewer's mind as he lays down the book. First, Dr. Cadbury accepts the ethical interest in the Gospel materials as genuine to the original teaching of Jesus. This is confirmed for him in the common ethical interest which one finds in the Talmudic sources; and it, in turn, makes plausible the genuineness of the apocalyptic interest as well (p. 13).

Secondly, the author does not find in Jesus' teachings an *Interimsethik* nor a Utopian system, but rather a more practical, day-by-day ethic with a renunciatory emphasis and a rather general and constant demand for something extra on the part of the individual (pp. 14ff.).

In the third place, he finds an emphasis upon parables of "growth and fruition" which, he believes, indicates a special attitude toward the future. It aims to inculcate in man a patience with the apparently tedious development of the divine plan (pp. 39ff.).

Again, Dr. Cadbury notes the recurring "motif of an absent master" in the parables (pp. 43ff.). "Instead of the comforting presence of God, he (Jesus) seems to teach the absence of God. . . . Normal rectitude, fidelity, diligence, are expected of us and not emergency behavior. . . . This absence . . . is frankly nonmystical, and holds out no promise of a realized presence of God in this life" (p. 45). We would agree as to the quality of service expected of the servants in these parables, but are inclined to believe that it is pressing a secondary feature beyond its intended application to insist that such parables are not consistent with the teaching of a mystical experience.

In the fifth place, it is proposed that although the rewards of a life well lived figured frequently in Jesus' teaching, his chief interest lay rather in the self-validating truth of his ethical demands, such rewards being often little more than the poetic line necessary to the compensation of a couplet (pp. 113-20). To our way of thinking, this is far too simple an erasure of a feature exhibiting marked prominence in the Gospels.

Finally, it is noted that Jesus nowhere uses apocalyptic urgency to belittle man's responsibility. That is to say, man's rôle is not to be, in any sense, one of

passive waiting. He must remain alert, avoiding temptation, exercising loyalty to certain priorities in life, and praying importunately for the coming of the kingdom. All in all, there is much to stimulate and to challenge within the brief compass of this little book.

T. M. TAYLOR

The Pittsburgh-Xenia Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Contrasts: The Arts and Religion. By ALEC ROBERTSON. London: S. C. M. Press, 1947. pp. 128. 6s.

"Though I am an imperfect member of the most dogmatic of all the churches—the Roman Catholic Church"—this author tells us—"the artist in me insistently tells the priest in me that there is an ultimate point at which all things become one. Unity in diversity is clearly shown in the history of art, and tragically obscured in the history of religion."

To discover the subtle links that exist between all great art and true religion, he undertakes the work through a series of antitheses. His choice of "witnesses" is original and his treatment sensitive. He makes no claim to philosophical consistency or conclusiveness, but presents these particular painters, poets, and composers because they have meant so much to *him*. Such a "subjective" approach, he rightly claims, has value; all too much has been written both in the artistic and the religious fields which was not the fruit of a firsthand personal response.

The first "contrast" is between the philosophy of Keats implicit in his letters and the fully formulated philosophy of art given by Maritain in *Art and Scholasticism*. Chapters follow on Bach and Handel, Milton and Shakespeare, Housman and Hopkins, and finally El Greco, Blake, and Van Gogh.

It is probably with intention that our author begins with the artist of this group who was most purely an artist and most divorced from Christianity—accused, in fact, of a completely sensuous orientation to life. Keats was indeed no Christian; but he had a priestlike attitude toward his art. "I have loved the principle of beauty in all things and the memory of great men." He was certain of nothing but "the holiness of the heart's affections and of the truth of imagination." "Love is my religion. I could die for that." He did not know that love is the Third Person of the Trinity, that love inspired the whole New Testament revelation from Bethlehem to the Cross. But he had a deep insight needed by many professing Christians when he said, "Nothing is real until it is experienced." Over against Keats's purely aesthetic awareness, our author sets Maritain's philosophical and Christian approach to art, and finds that "the poet and the philosopher, all artists and all priests, are in the world to discover and display to us the principle of beauty in all things: and it is a spiritual principle" (p. 29).

Art and religion, we are told in the concluding chapter, are twin manifestations of the spirit; great art is always haunted by the sense of the Divine. Modern life imposes severe limitations and checks to our sense of the beautiful as well as our sense of the sacred. We need a new and broader synthesis of art and religion. At present, an adequate synthesis exists only in ecclesiastical art, in the Cathedral and the Liturgy, perfect marriages of art and religion.

But the efficacy of these lovely expressions within the Church in kindling a response in mankind at large is tragically hindered by "the repugnant spectre of the temporal power, which, more than anything else, has led to world-wide apostasy."

It is worthy of note, in these times, that certain sensitive Catholics feel this while nevertheless remaining loyal to the full Catholic truth-and-beauty. There is something in this confession with which Protestants need to find deeper fellowship, something to inspire gratitude. Temporal power is, we should remember, not a problem of the Roman Church only. Almost any church which can afford the traditional kinds of visible and audible beauty is, in our present society, evidently existing by virtue of social and economic privileges which divide man from man—and therefore tends to lull the worshiper into a sense of cloistered refuge from the actual world. And yet it cannot be the will of God that we should turn our backs on beauty.

"Somehow we must find our way back, through true humility, simplicity, and poverty to the gifts which opposing none, resisting none, God bears for those who will. Somehow the truth of art and religion must be united not only in the Cathedral, but in the world outside" (p. 122).

VERENA H. GREENE
New York City.

Living Your Life Today. By SAMUEL M. SHOEMAKER. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1947. pp. 128. \$1.50.

The brief chapters of this book were originally delivered over the radio and from the pulpit of Calvary Episcopal Church in New York. They have the intimate and personal flavor that is appealing in all of Samuel Shoemaker's writings.

All the subjects—"You Can Find Faith," "Making an Asset of Pain," "Victory Over Tedium," "The Basis of a Happy Marriage," "Spiritual Radio-Activity," and others that make up the eighteen chapters of this book—deal with two factors in life to which the author refers in the first chapter: what happens, and how we take what happens. All these topics are dealt with from the uppermost of the three levels of life that are considered in one of the chapters: "The level of instinct, the level of conscience, and the level of grace." Perhaps the chief characteristic of this Christian counselor is that he approaches all of life's problems on this last level. Imagination is quickened by the reading of this little book. One is caused to see the person that he might become if he were to grasp the secrets of true Christian living.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Union Avenue Christian Church, St. Louis, Missouri.

North Star Shining. By HILDEGARDE HOYT SWIFT. Illustrated by Lynd Ward. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1947. pp. 44. \$2.50.

One compensation for the loss of youth is the enjoyment of looking backward. No field provides more pleasure in this diversion than that of Christian education, for in this area is to be found the greatest progress in our generation.

The reviewer, once a member of the only Negro family in a white community, recalls vividly the ignominy felt as a child after reading in her Sunday-school paper a story of a little black boy who stole watermelons and for whom leniency of judgment was begged because he was not of the white race. It was her first awareness of the inferior social status of the Negro. Since she was totally uninformed in the realm of Negro history, the story left a deep scar. Her white

companions, equally without knowledge, were variously affected according to their natures.

How fortunate is the present generation of Christian educators to be able to place in the hands of all young people of every group such a book as *North Star Shining*, with its high drama in poetic form showing Negro contributions to the making of America based on authentic history. Virtues such as "fidelity," "courage," "endurance," and "work" are exemplified by Negro characters—about fourteen in all—plus a chapter in which are listed scientists, educators, artists, poets, writers, musicians, and many others.

The adult reader, although familiar with many of the stories, will thrill to the winged words of the author and find his imagination soaring as he studies the glowing illustrations which are an integral part of this small gem of a book.

CHARLOTTE A. SCOTT

Workshop for Cultural Democracy, 204 E. 18th Street, New York City.

How the Church Grows. By Roy A. Burkhardt. Harper. \$2.00. "When the book is finished, the reader has learned how each and every one of the creative impulses and skills of men can be used in the building of God's church. . . . It has the limitation, as well as the strength and charm, of being very American and very contemporary"—foreword by Henry R. Luce.

The Church Today and Tomorrow. David J. Wieand, Editor. Brethren Publishing House, Elgin, Illinois. Number One of the "Bethany Faculty Series," this little book presents six thoughtful and timely papers from the theological seminary of the Church of the Brethren.

George Macdonald: an Anthology. By C. S. Lewis. Macmillan. \$1.50. C. S. Lewis pays a debt of gratitude to this deeply Christian nineteenth-century preacher and novelist. Brief paragraphs are selected from his prose works, and given an admirable preface; the keynote is "God's Inexorable Love."

Faith and Freedom. By Russell J. Clinchy. Macmillan. \$1.75. "The Tories, the tired liberals, and the radicals have all made their contribution to the decline, and in many cases the fall of liberalism." "Its recovery is the central necessity of our time, as it is of every time."

The Church Across the Street. By Reginald D. Manwell and Sophia Lyon Fahs. Beacon Press. \$2.50. "The story of how the many different kinds of churches came to be." A popular presentation of their founders and origins.

Contributions of the Quakers. By Elizabeth Janet Gray. Pendle Hill, Wallingford, Pennsylvania. 50¢. A reprint of a booklet on the Quaker con-

tributions to American life, past and present, formerly published by F. A. Davis Company. The author, Mrs. E. G. Vining, is the present American tutor of Crown Prince Akihito of Japan.

John the Universal Gospel. By Chester Warren Quimby. Macmillan. \$2.75. An able popular presentation of the main findings of present-day scholarship on the Fourth Gospel.

Everyman's Adventure. By Merle William Boyer. Harper. \$2.50. "A stimulating and novel treatment of an old theme, that of the church and its program . . . vivid in its picturesque writing, remarkable in its knowledge of the whole church situation, and shrewd and penetrating in its suggestions. . . ."

The Great Beyond. By Maurice Maeterlinck. Philosophical Library. \$3.00. The well-known philosopher-poet gives us a collection of fragments and dialogues in a "literary notebook of the kind kept by authors from the day of Pascal onwards." Meditations on life, death, and God, half agnostic, half pantheistic.

The Message of the Bible. By R. K. Orchard. Lutterworth. 5s. net. A brief exposition for religious educators, on the religious message of the Bible as a whole, to supplement their particular courses.

The Approach to Belief. By C. J. Stranks. Lutterworth. 5s. net. A readable discussion for people outside the churches, of the basic questions of God's existence, the Bible and science, the reasons for morality, the reasons for the church.

Calvinism in Times of Crisis. Baker Book House. \$1.50. Addresses delivered at the Third American Calvinistic Conference held at Calvin College and Seminary, Grand Rapids, in August.

And Your Neighbor; the Social Principles of Jesus and Life Problems. By Edwin Leavitt Clarke. Association Press. 50¢. A discussion course "for young people who would find Walter Rauschenbusch's *The Social Principles of Jesus* somewhat too mature."

Committed Unto Us. By Willis Lamott. Friendship Press. Cloth, \$1.50; paper, \$1.00. A book on world evangelism for church groups, with questions for discussion.

A Guide for Leaders of Adult Groups on World Evangelism. By Margaret B. Cobb. Friendship Press. 35¢. For use with *Committed Unto Us*.

Some Notes on the Alcohol Problem. By Deets Pickett. Abingdon-Cokesbury. Cloth, \$1.00; paper, 50¢. Prepared for Methodists in connection with the Temperance Advance Movement; includes address by Bishop Wilbur E. Hammaker, and "basic, up-to-the-minute source material."

Great Stewards of the Bible. By John E. Simpson. Revell, \$1.25. A "biographical exposition of stewardship" which chooses fresh and unexpected illustrations.

Jesus Christ: the Same Yesterday, Today, and Forever. By John McNaugher. Revell. \$2.50. The president emeritus of Pittsburgh-Xenia Theo-

logical Seminary argues for the reasonableness of belief in Jesus Christ as Son of God.

The School of Jesus: a Primer of Discipleship. By G. R. H. Shafte. Association Press. \$1.00. A booklet of studies for small groups. "I have tried to express a practical Christian discipleship of "doing the Will"—a sure way of learning to "know the doctrine."

Youth Courageous. By Thomas F. Chilcote, Jr. Tidings, Nashville, Tennessee. A handbook for young people, challenging to Christian life and service.

Mary of Nazareth: A True Portrait. By Iginio Giordani. Macmillan. \$2.75. "A contemplation of the Blessed Virgin . . . an epic poem in prose" by an Italian Catholic, translated by two American nuns.

Nervous Disorders and Character. By John G. McKenzie. Harper. \$1.50. Lectures given at Oxford by a leading British authority on the interrelation of psychology and religion.

Their Faith and Ours. Part I: The Old Testament. By Muriel Streibert Curtis. Cloister Press, Louisville, Ky. Teacher's and Pupil's Manuals, \$1.00 and \$1.50. An excellent course prepared by an experienced teacher at Wellesley College, for young people and adults.

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